

**A measuring tool for integrated internal communication: A case study of  
the University of South Africa library**

by

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA	Analysis of variance
CHET	Centre for Higher Education Transformation
CIT	Critical incident technique
CSQ	Communication satisfaction questionnaire
BEE	Black economic empowerment
BBBE	Broad-based black economic empowerment
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry (South Africa)
EE	Employment equity
HEI	Higher education institution
HR	Human Resources
IFIS	Integrated functional information system
IIC	Integrated internal communications
IICA	Integrated internal communication audit
ICA	International Communication Association
ICT	Information and communication technology
ISS	Intercultural communication sensitivity scale
LET	Library Executive Team
LMT	Library Management Team
LRA	Labour Relations Act
OCCI	Organisational communication conflict instrument
OCD	Organisational communication development
OCS	Organisational culture survey
ODeL	Open distance electronic learning
ODL	Open distance learning
ORCID	Open Researcher and Contributor ID
POF	Process owner's forum
PoPI	Protection of Personal Information
RICA	Regulation on Interception of Electronic and Related Information and Communications
SAPO	South African Post Office
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SWOT	Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats



TUS	Technology usage scale
UNGC	United Nations Global Compact
Unisa	University of South Africa
VAT	Value added tax

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## DECLARATION

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**A measuring tool for integrated internal communication: a case study of the University of South Africa Library**

I declare that the above thesis is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



Signature

2018-11-14

Date

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study developed and tested an integrated internal communication audit (IICA) tool to evaluate the communication strengths and weaknesses of the Unisa Library. The existing communication audit instruments were explored, namely: the Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ) and the International Communication Association (ICA) audit were adapted and complemented by the Organisational Culture Survey (OCS) and the Critical Incident Technique (CIT). The current trends and the trends in South Africa were also explored.

The sequential mixed method design consisting of the semi-structured qualitative interviews and the quantitative surveys were used to collect data. The ATLAS.ti and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software packages were used to analyse qualitative and quantitative data.

The results revealed the IICA as an appropriate tool for measuring the integrated internal communication of the Unisa Library. The IICA identified the communication needs of employees; the active and preferred communication channels; and the positive and negative communication experiences of employees.

### **KEY TERMS:**

Internal communication, internal communication audit, integrated internal communication audit, measuring tool, communication channels, two-way symmetrical communication, media richness, organisational culture, diversity, customised services, communication experiences.



## **OPSOMMING**

Hierdie studie het 'n geïntegreerde interne kommunikasie-oudit (IICA)-hulpmiddel ontwikkel en getoets om kommunikasie-sterkpunte en -swakhede van die Unisa-biblioteek te evalueer. Die bestaande kommunikasie-oudit-instrumente was ondersoek, naamlik: die Kommunikasietevredenheidsvraelys (CSQ) en die Internasionale Kommunikasievereniging (ICA) se oudit is aangepas en gekomplementeer deur die Organisasiekultuur-opname (OCS) en die Kritiese-insident-tegniek (CIT).

Die sekwensiële gemengdemetode-ontwerp, bestaande uit die halfgestruktureerde kwalitatiewe onderhoude en die kwantitatiewe opnames, is gebruik om data in te samel. Die ATLAS.ti-programmatuurpakket en die Statistiese Pakket vir Sosiale Wetenskappe (SPSS)-programmatuur is gebruik om kwalitatiewe en kwantitatiewe data te ontleed.

Die resultate gewys die IICA as 'n geskikte hulpmiddel was in die meting van die geïntegreerde interne kommunikasie van die Biblioteek. Die IICA geïdentifiseer die kommunikasie behoeftes van werknemers; die aktiewe en voorkeur kommunikasie kanale; en die positiewe en negatiewe kommunikasie ervarings van werknemers.

### **SLEUTELWOORDE:**

Interne kommunikasie, interne kommunikasie oudit, geïntegreerde interne kommunikasie oudit, metingshulpmiddel, kommunikasiekanale, tweerigting-simmetriese kommunikasie, media rykdom, organisasiekultuur, diversiteit, aangepaste dienste, kommunikasie-ervarings.

## MAÑWELEDZO

Ngudo iyi yo bveledza na u linga tshishumiswa tsha u Sedzulusa Vhudavhidzani ha nga ngomu ho Tanganelaho (Integrated Internal Communication Audit (IICA), u tola vhuḁi na vhuḁhi ha vhudavhidzani kha Laiburari ya Univesithi ya Afrika Tshipembe. Zwishumiswa zwa u sedza vhudavhidzani zwi re hone zwo sedzuluswaho zwi katela: Mbudzisambekanywa dza Vhudavhidzani dzine dza fusha thodea (Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire) (CSQ) na tshishumiswa tsha u sedzulusa vhudavhidzani tsha Dzangano la Dzitshaka la Vhudavhidzani (International Communication Association) (ICA). Zwishumiswa izwo zwo ḁadziḁwa nga tshishumiswa tsha Thodisiḁo ya Mvelele ya Tshiimiswa (Organisational Culture Survey) (OCS) na Tshikalo tsha u ela Maitele a Zwithu zwa ndeme (Critical Incident Technique) (CIT).

Pulane ya thevhekano ya maitele o tanganelaho o vhumḁwaho nga maitele a thodisiḁo ane a shumiswa kha saintsi dza matshilisano (qualitative) na maitele a thodisiḁo ane a shumisa zwiḁatisiḁika na mbalo (quantitative) zwo shumiswa u kuvhanganya mawanwa. Phakhedzhi ya Sofuthiwea ya ATLAS.ti na phakhedzhi ya Siḁatisiḁika ya Saintsi dza Matshilisano (Statistical Package for Social Sciences - SPSS) dzo shumiswa u saukanya mawanwa a thodisiḁo dza matshilisano na a thodisiḁo dza zwiḁatisiḁika na mbalo.

Mvelelo dzo bvisela khagala uri IICA ndi tshishumiswa tsho teaho u ela vhudavhidzani ho tanganelaho ha nga ngomu Laiburari ya Univesithi ya Afrika Tshipembe. Tshishumiswa itshi tsho bvisela khagala thodea dza vhashumi dza vhudavhidzani, zwishumiswa zwa vhudavhidzani zwine zwa khou shumiswa na zwi takalelwaho; na tshenzhemo ya vhashumi kha vhudavhidzani havhudi and vhu si havhudi.

**MATHEMO A NDEME:**

Vhudavhidzani ha nga ngomu, u sedza vhudavhidzani ha nga ngomu, u sedza vhudavhidzani ha nga ngomu ho ṭanganelaho, tshishumiswa tsha u ela, zwishumiswa zwa vhudavhidzani, vhudavhidzani ha ndinganahuvhili, tshumelo dza vhudavhidzani dzo pfumaho, mvelele ya tshiimiswa, Ṭhanganelo, tshumelo dzo senguluswaho, tshenzhemo kha zwa vhudavhidzani.

## CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

### 1.1 Introduction

Communication is a multidisciplinary concept that manifests itself in two different forms: as a tool for interaction and as an academic field of study. As a tool for interaction, communication is viewed as the basis of organisational existence, in that it is used on a daily basis for personal communication transactions and for organisational communication purposes (Ali & Haider 2012). As an academic field of study, the discipline of communication focuses on the study of the way in which people interact, solve problems and process information. This study focus on communication as a tool for interaction in organisations.

Organisational communication research has evolved over time to the age where researchers become interested in addressing communication problems that emanate from the interactions of people in organisations. This has resulted in the need to evaluate the strength and weaknesses of the communication that takes place in the internal organisational environment, referred to as *internal communication*, which is an integrated process (Rajhans 2012).

Scholars (Miller 2006; Cheney, Christensen, Zorn & Ganesh 2011; Wagner 2013; Steele & Plenty 2014; Men 2014; Ruck 2015; Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2015; Mao & Hale 2015; Wilkinson & Weitkamp 2016) categorise communication that occurs in organisations into two approaches: communication within organisations and organisations as communication. Communication within organisations is the first approach, which involves the transfer of information between a sender and a receiver. This approach is criticised for its failure to cater for emerging complex situations in organisations, resulting in the need for a shift to a perspective that accounts for organisational challenges and complexities, generational issues, cultural differences and technological advancements that make effective

communication the lifeblood of the organisation and place human interaction at the centre of internal communication (Koschmann 2012; Hasel 2011; Horn 2014 & Fill 2013). These emerging complex situations affect the Unisa Library, as it spreads across international borders, with a branch in Ethiopia.

Organisations as communication, which is the second approach to communication, was identified as a solution to emerging complex situations in organisations, because it addresses the gaps experienced with the first approach, that is, communication within organisations. The approach of organisations as communication focuses on communication from two perspectives: the constructive and the constitutive views. The constructive view accommodates the fundamental and complex process that shapes social reality, such as negotiation and interpretation of meanings, whereas the constitutive view looks at communication as a platform to question and investigate key organisational realities and complexities by exploring and examining communication processes in search of a more favourable organisational outcome for employees (Koschmann 2012).

This study adopts the constitutive view to communication, which provides a platform for exploring and examining or investigating key communication challenges in an organisation; hence the need to develop an IICA tool for the Unisa Library.

This chapter focuses on the background and rationale of the study and is structured as follows: the description of key terms, background to the study, problem statement and purpose of the study, research question, relevance of the topic to the field of organisational communication, relationship of the topic to the discipline of communication, delimitation of the study and the conclusion and chapter demarcation.

## **1.2 Description of key terms**

The key terms are defined and described to draw meaningful conclusions; ensure consistency in their use; and to clarify the origin of the research problem (Babbie & Mouton 2001).

Since this study seeks to develop a measuring tool for the Unisa Library, the needs, expectations, perceptions and opinions of employees comprising the workforce at the Unisa Library will be explored (Hasel 2011). To do so, the study will explore the following constructs, definitions and propositions of communication as the focus areas in addressing the research problem: internal communication, integrated internal communication, measuring tool, internal communication audit, integrated internal communication audit, media richness and organisational culture.

### ***1.2.1 Internal communication versus integrated internal communication***

*Internal communication* is defined as the process of communication that takes place between people in the internal environment of an organisation, directed at the sharing of information for the achievement of both the organisational objectives and the communication needs of employees (Jeffres 2008; Rogala & Kaniewska-Sęba 2013; Alnajjar 2015).

The internal communication process is regarded as a segment of public relations that applies the excellence theory in facilitating the two-way symmetrical flow of information, the relationships between members of the organisation and the participation of employees in management activities; namely: policies, remuneration, structure, communication styles and standards (Bottazzo 2005; Grunig 2013). The purpose of internal communication is to transmit information; build trust relationships; recognise employees as internal stakeholders in the communication process of the organisation; improve

communication climate and coordinate the work making use of communication channels (Ali & Haider 2012; Horn 2014; Mishra, Boyton & Mishra 2014).

Njomo (2013) asserts that effective internal communication binds an organisation and enhance employee morale, while Horn (2014) considers effective internal communication as the lifeblood of the business world. Ali and Haider (2012) argue that ineffective internal communication may affect employee satisfaction and may result in reduced productivity, absenteeism and turnover or termination of service (Tsai, Chuang & Hsieh 2009).

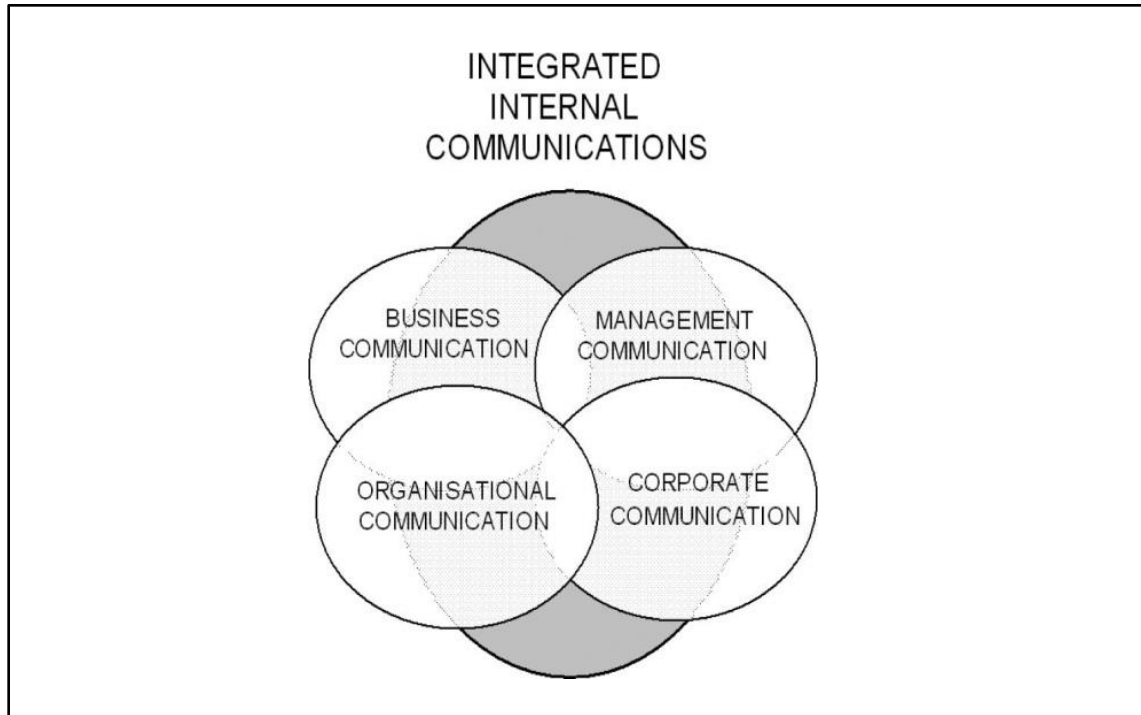
Internal communication is, therefore, identified as an important concept that involves organisations and employees for the achievement of organisational goals. The most important role of internal communication is to meet mutual expectations and demands between management and employees (Engin & Akgöz 2013).

The internal communication process should be measured by using the most adequate measuring tool to identify the needs of employees and other aspects and processes of the internal communication system of the organisation that needs improvement (Downs & Adrian 2004; Hogard & Ellis 2006; Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2015).

In this study, reference will be made to integrated internal communications (IIC) from a multidisciplinary perspective, where it is defined as all formal and informal communication taking place internally at all levels of an organisation (Kalla 2005). A holistic approach is proposed by considering the integration of the following four domains of communication as the cornerstones of internal communication: business communication that focuses on skill of employees; management communication that focuses on the skills and capabilities of members of management; corporate communication that focuses on the flow of formal communication that takes place in the organisation; and organisational communication that addresses the philosophical and theoretical issues of

internal communication that informs the identity, image and organisational strategy ; Miller & Barbour 2014; Miller 2006).

The conceptual framework of integrated internal communication outlined in Figure 1.1 highlights these aspects.



**Figure 1.1: A conceptual framework of integrated internal communication  
(Adapted from Kalla 2005:306)**

In these four domains, organisational communication, which is the field of study within which this study emanates, recognises the inclusion of all internal communication activities in a holistic and integrated manner, taking cognisance of the fact that communication is the right and responsibility of individual employees within an organisation (Kalla 2005).

### **1.2.2 Measuring tool**

The concept of measurement is empirically defined as the process of describing abstract concepts in terms of specific indicators by assigning numbers or labels



to outcomes, which are dependent constructs, following a set of rules (Field 2013; Lal Das 2017; Salkind 2018). A construct is an empirical representation of concepts that include anything that can take more than one value (Ruane 2005 & Salkind 2018). Salkind (2018) further refers to a tool as a test that assesses an outcome.

Communication audits make use of an assessment tool or test consisting of constructs, which are abstracts or concepts that explain behaviour, but cannot be observed directly. Examples of constructs include feedback, relationship, personality, etc. Although the terms *concept* and *construct* almost have the same meaning, constructs are operationally defined in terms of processes that can be measured by allocating scores or values ranging from the lowest to the highest, such as unsatisfactory, marginal, adequate and excellent. A construct can serve as a theoretical framework of research (Gay, Mills & Airasian 2011; Lal Das 2017).

A construct must be valid to make sure that the quality of the test measures what it is supposed to measure. Construct validity is defined as “the examination of how well a test score reflects an underlying construct” (Salkind 2018:408).

Based on the foregoing description of terms and processes, this study defines a *measuring tool* as a test (e.g. questionnaire) that follows a set of rules in assessing a construct. In a questionnaire, the values are allocated to constructs, ranging from the lowest to the highest with the purpose of collecting data.

Emanating from the definition of a measuring tool, it becomes imperative to define a questionnaire. Ary, Jacobs, Irvine and Walker (2018:546) define a *questionnaire* as “an instrument in which respondents provide written responses to questions”.

### **1.2.3 Internal communication audit**

An internal communication audit (ICA) involves an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the communication system of an organisation (Hogard & Ellis 2006; Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2015). The ICA identifies problems such as the lack of information, faulty communication channels, lack of supervisory communication, poor communication, unproductive meetings and delays in the communication process (Quinn & Hargie 2004). Van der Walt and Breet-van Niekerk (2006:353) further indicate that a communication audit provides the organisation with information on how its “internal publics” perceive its communication efforts. In this study, internal publics are employees at the Unisa Library.

### **1.2.4 Integrated internal communication audit**

This study presents a shift from the term ICA to an IICA, which entails data-collection techniques or methods that are used as evaluation tools that identify the main strengths and weaknesses of the integrated internal communication system of an organisation that involves relationships with internal stakeholders. The communication system of an organisation is evaluated in an integrated manner, so as to include emerging trends in the field of organisational communication, e.g. issues of organisational culture and gender. In this study, an evaluation tool is significant, as it promotes the operational excellence and will include both qualitative interviews and quantitative questionnaires (Du Plessis & Schoonraad 2006; Palter, MacRae & Grantcharov 2011; Hogard & Ellis 2006; Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2015).

In this study, *integrated internal communication audit (IICA)* is defined as a measuring tool that evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of the internal communication system of an organisation in an integrated manner.

### **1.2.5 Media richness**

The concept of media richness refers to the amount of information that can be transmitted or communicated in a manner that enhances the receiver's degree of comprehension (Ivancevich, Konopaske & Matteson 2011; Chang, Liang, Chou & Lin 2017). Hasel (2011) relates media richness to the quality of information, which can be affected by factors beyond organisational control.

### **1.2.6 Organisational culture**

*Organisational culture* is defined as an integrated pattern of human behaviour that is unique to a particular organisation (Ledimo 2015). Ivancevich, Konopaske and Matteson (2011) and Keyton (2011) further refer to organisational culture as a pattern of assumptions and values that are invented, discovered or developed by a group of people to cope with organisational life. This definition is adopted in this study, because it emphasises the integration of human behaviour in an organisation.

According to Jarvis (2016), the concept of culture as it applies to organisations is complex, dynamic, ever changing and is affected by differences in race, gender, age, religion, education and ethnicity. The concept also encompasses organisational art work and members of an organisation acquiring the skills that assist them to adapt to specific environmental conditions.

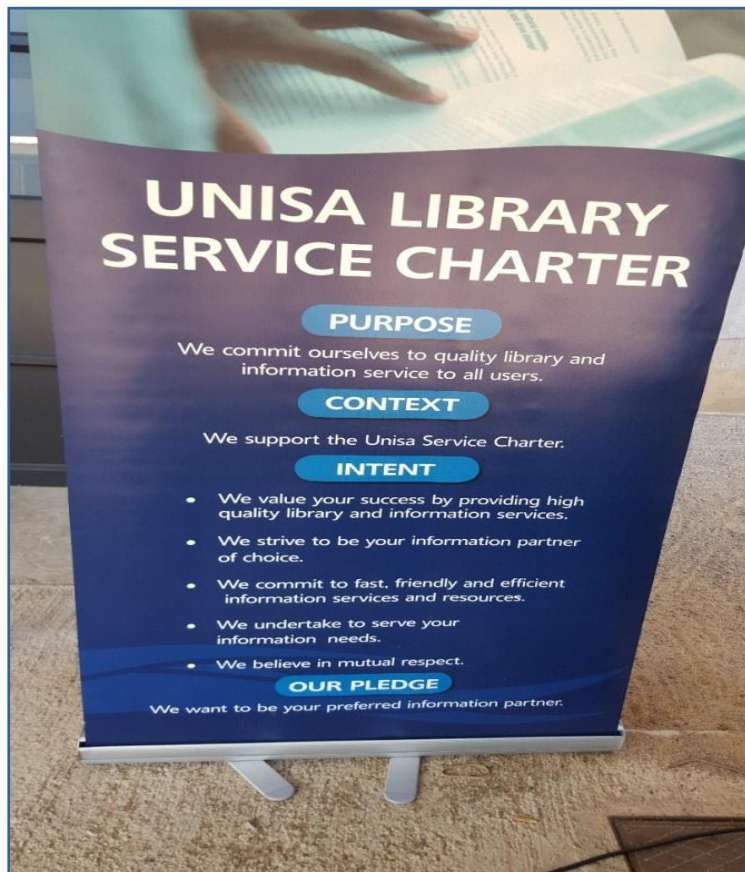
Keyton (2014) and Priola and Hurrell (2011) argue that organisational culture is not transmitted from one individual to another in an organisation or dictated by executive management, but negotiated because, it is a product of the interaction between employees and the organisation.

Organisational culture is rooted in the beliefs, norms, values, principles, expectations and meanings shared by employees and displayed as

organisational symbols in the form of language, philosophy, rules, ceremonies, mission statement and organisational literature. A symbol is any object, event, act, quality or relation that serves as a vehicle for conveying meaning, while language refers to the use of vocal sounds and written signs to convey meaning between members of a group (Ivancevich, Konopaske & Matteson 2011). To ensure organisational effectiveness, the organisation should recruit, select and retain employees whose values best fit those of the organisation (Ivancevich, Konopaske & Matteson 2011).

In this study, organisational culture will refer to a set of art work, values and assumptions that employees create through interaction and that evolves with time.

In promoting organisational culture, the Mukleuneck Campus of the Unisa Library displays literature on the vision, mission and business values, including the Library Service Charter, as presented in Figure 1.2.



**Figure 1.2: A display of the Unisa Library Service Charter as a symbol of organisational culture (Source: Author's fieldwork)**

### **1.3 Background to the study**

This study provides a background of the Unisa Library by focusing on: contextualisation, challenges experienced by the Unisa Library, key goals and strategies, the Unisa Library staff composition and staff, including the training and development of staff.

#### **1.3.1 Contextualisation**

The Unisa Library was established in 1946 as an organisational unit of the University of South Africa (Unisa). It is one of the largest open distance learning (ODL) academic libraries in Africa serving more than 370 000 students

registered with Unisa in 130 countries. On 23 July 2018, the enrolment statistics were 371 415 registered students (Unisa Library 2017).

The Unisa Library has 14 branches: 13 in South Africa and one in Ethiopia. South African branches of the Library include: Cape Town, Durban, East London, Ekurhuleni, Florida, Johannesburg, Nelspruit, Polokwane, Pretoria Main campus (Muckleneuk), Rustenburg, Science Library (Florida), Graduate School of Business Leadership (SBL) and Sunnyside. The Library works in partnership with 41 public libraries and six correctional services (Unisa Library: Branch Locator 2015; Unisa Library 2017).

In January 2004, the new Unisa was established as a result of the merger between the old Unisa, Technikon Southern Africa and the distance education campus of Vista University. The merger resulted in the Unisa Transformation Agenda, which affected the Unisa Library. In 2014, the Thabo Mbeki Presidential Library and Museum was established and launched on 16 September 2014, based on the concept of African Renaissance (Unisa 2015b:14).

As part of the consultation process, documents and information received from the Unisa Library that informs this study include:

- The Unisa 2015 Strategic Plan: An agenda for transformation;
- Unisa Department of Library Services: 2015–2018 Talent Management and Employment Equity;
- Unisa Library: Annual Report 2015;
- Unisa Library: Annual Report 2016;
- Unisa Library: Annual Report 2017;
- Unisa Libraries at a glance;
- The Unisa Library staff composition, 2015;
- The Unisa Library staff composition, March 2018;
- The July 2018 student enrolment; and
- The launch of LibQUAL survey tool.

The Unisa Library employs a diverse workforce to ensure that services and resources are provided to students, researchers and academic, professional and administrative staff regardless of their location (Unisa Department of Library Services 2015). The Library provides access to an extensive collection of books, audio-visual material, electronic databases and journals. The core function of the Library is to provide high quality information services to support teaching, learning and research by optimising appropriate technology (Unisa 2015. *Libraries @ a glance*; Unisa Library 2017).

The research, teaching and learning function of the Unisa Library is responsible for research space clients; request services for students who cannot visit the Library; and information search services, where Search Librarians offer subject-specific information search service to researchers. The Library supports the Unisa's strategy of increasing research output and the delivery of services that facilitate the delivery of requested library materials by using e-mail, safemail, ordinary mail, courier and Unisa vehicles (Unisa Library 2015).

The 2017 Annual Report of Unisa Library provides the vision, mission and values of the Library:

- Vision statement: Towards the leading open distance learning library in Africa.
- Mission statement: Providing access to information in support of teaching, learning and research by optimising appropriate technology, developing and preserving library collections.
- Business values: The Library Service Charter provides the following values: customer satisfaction; equitable access to information in all forms; fair use; innovation and excellence; intellectual freedom and quality service; ethical and collective responsibility; integrity; responsive student-centredness; and dignity in diversity (Unisa Department of Library Services 2015; Unisa Library 2017).

The Talent Management Plan of the Library refers to an integrated set of processes, programmes and cultural practices aimed at attracting, developing, deploying and retaining talented employees who can contribute to the achievement of the Unisa's strategic objectives (Unisa Department of Library Services 2015).

### **1.3.2 Challenges experienced by the Unisa Library**

The following challenges, which are experienced by the Unisa Library, are relevant to this study:

- The creation of a common organisational culture to address the restructuring that affects productivity, efficiency, morale and effectiveness;
- The profile of management is highly skewed in terms of race and gender representation;
- There is a need for a recruitment and retention strategy that gives attention to succession planning, career path and transfer of skills to address representivity and diversity as highly-qualified black academics are lured by lucrative incentives for the private sector;
- Line managers are criticised for not adhering to due processes, planning and deadlines;
- Lack of coordinated quality assurance effort in all functions: the necessary control mechanisms need to be put in place as a matter of priority;
- Increasing levels of management and wider span of control results in silos, little synergy and misalignment of resource allocation and use; and
- The dynamic and complex nature of the university makes it difficult to provide accurate and timely management and planning information (Unisa 2015b:11).

The foregoing challenges – particularly those in areas of priority, such as the skewed profile of line management in terms of race and gender, the lack of quality assurance mechanisms and the provision of accurate and timely management and planning information – further confirms the need for this



study, so as to make sure that the library function of the Unisa Library is integrated and that measures are in place to address those challenges.

Apart from the Unisa-wide challenges, the Unisa Library experienced specific challenges in 2014 and 2018, such as the South African Post Office (SAPO) strike, which affected the delivery of books, journals and other materials from the Library to students and clients. During that period, communication to students occurred through various channels such as myUnisa, Library website, Facebook, Twitter and SMS. The strike impacted on the communication budget and the courier services budget of the Library. The Library strives to achieve its primary responsibility of supporting teaching, learning and research in the midst of the changing technological landscape (Unisa Library 2015).

Apart from the challenges experienced, the Library is committed to excellence in service delivery by providing equal access to information to everyone, including clients living with physical disabilities. This includes a change of legislation, processes and procedures to accommodate the special needs of clients with visual impairment disabilities.

The Library has adapted to new technological changes that enhances access to information resources. The Library introduced the PressReader in 2017, which is the world's most comprehensive and trusted digital news resource which offers a vast range of local and international publications ranging from newspapers to magazines. All Unisa Library users can access the PressReader for free via the library catalogue or as an *App* on tablets, smartphones or eReader devices running on iOS, Android and Blackberry. Statistics showed that 1,41858 issues were read by the Unisa community via PressReader from February 2017 to December 2017 (Unisa Library 2017).

### **1.3.3 Key goals and strategies**

The Unisa 2015 strategic plan focuses, amongst others, on the achievement of the following key goals and strategies that are relevant to the Library and closely related to this study:

- Goal 6.1: Effect a seamless transition to harmonised and coherent structures and the integration of policies, systems and practices for the merged institution (Unisa 2015b:14).
- Goal 6.6: Create a nurturing environment to promote students' well-being to foster a sense of belonging to Unisa. Student population served by the Library is diverse in terms of age, race, ethnic group and nationality; including disabilities. This includes the development of a communication strategy to ensure deliberate and regular communication between the university, students and alumni (Unisa 2015b:19).
- Goal 6.7: Establish quality governance, planning, administrative and management systems led by best practices. Integrated and coordinated planning process will be institutionalised (Unisa 2015b:20). In line with this strategic goal, a measuring tool for integrated internal communication is necessary to promote governance.
- Goal 6.8: Manage financial, human and infrastructural resources rationally. Thus, the reduction of inequalities and pursuing social justice, support African Renaissance and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) to ensure that employees enjoy the fruits of democracy (Unisa 2015b:21).
- Goal 6.9: Secure a healthy and stimulating environment for staff, students and visitors, and protect the assets of the university. Annual staff and student satisfaction surveys will be conducted and safety and security

measures published within the university, which is an improvement in the communication system (Unisa 2015b:23).

- Goal 6.10: Establish a performance-orientated approach to management. Performance management systems will be clearly communicated to the institution (Unisa 2015b:24).

In addition to these key goals, the Unisa Library identifies, amongst others, the following objectives for 2017: addressing the diverse academic needs and programs of Unisa; seamless access to electronic reserves and information resources and services; expanding access to libraries through partnerships, create a culture of service excellence; promoting open Scholarship; developing the Unisa Library resources to contribute to knowledge development; effective participation in project Mvusuludzo; renovating library services aligned with future library spaces; and utilising technology to enhance open distance electronic learning (ODEL) library services (Unisa Library 2017).

The achievement of the identified goals and objectives will assist in the diversity of the workforce, which breaks the communication barriers between employees; the eradication of inequality to enhance trust relationships; the flow of communication between employees; and the integration of systems and practices, which includes the coordination of the communication system of the Library. Two-way communication between management and employees should be encouraged; hence the need for the improved performance management system and annual staff satisfaction surveys. This study paves the way for those surveys.

#### **1.3.4 The Unisa Library staff composition**

The target population for this study consists of the Unisa Library staff members based at the Muckleneuk Campus. The staff composition currently has 222

employees, consisting of two hundred and sixteen 216 full-time permanent employees and six (6) temporary employees (Unisa Library 2018).

The staff composition is presented in Table 1.1 (Staff composition by gender) and Table 1.2 (Staff composition by qualifications).

**Table 1.1: Staff composition by gender**

Directorate	Female	Male	Total
Client Services	34	17	51
Corporate Services	19	13	32
Information Resource Content Management	37	8	45
Information Resource Distribution	55	37	92
Executive Director's Office	2	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>222</b>

(Unisa Library 2015:23, updated in March 2018)

**Table 1.2: Staff Composition by qualifications**

Directorate	Directorate	Masters	Honours	Bachelor	Diploma	Higher Certificate/ Matric	Total
Client Services	1	13	19	12	3	5	53
Corporate Services	1	0	10	11	5	11	38
IR Content Management	2	8	13	15	5	3	46
IR Distribution	0	5	12	16	10	47	90
Executive Director Office	2	0	0	0	0	1	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>230</b>

(Unisa Library 2015:23)

In addition to the qualifications reported in the 2015 Annual Report, as presented in Table 1.2, the 2016 Annual Report presents the following qualifications obtained by employees in 2016: six employees obtain a Bachelor of Information Science, one employee completed a Bachelor of Commerce; one employee completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Library and Information Science; one employee completed a National Diploma in Chemical Engineering; and one employee completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Library and Information Science (Unisa Library 2016).

The 2017 Annual Report presents the following qualifications: one Postgraduate Diploma in Library and Information Science; one Information and Knowledge Management qualification; two Master's of Information Science (MIS); and a Doctor of Literature and Philosophy. Staff training in the past three years (2015, 2016 and 2017) serves as an indication of the commitment of the Unisa Library to promote a professional workforce that provides a high level of performance and service delivery.

### **1.3.5 *Staff training and development***

Employees were exposed to the following training programs in 2014 to improve performance and service delivery: a conversation on Ethics for new Library staff members; the induction for new Library staff; training on human resources (HR) policies; training session on Open Researcher and Contributor (ORCID); compliance monitoring: Copyright Act, 1978 and Unisa Copyright infringement & Plagiarism Policy; Resource Description and Access Orientation and Consultation; UNGC Principles, Business Writing Skills; Protection of Personal Information (PoPI) Readiness Audit Workshop; Writing for publication by Emerald; Leader Cast 2014; and Library Technology Showcase (Unisa Library 2015:23).

In 2017, the following human resource policy awareness workshops were conducted: grievance policy for employees; bullying and harassment policy;

employee disciplinary code and workplace relations; leave policy and leave procedure; and employee wellness programmes that provide professional guidance on aspects of your life such as financial, relationships, family matters, stress at work, trauma and change (Unisa Library 2017:23).

Staff members also attended various library related conferences and showcases such as: Library and Information Association of South Africa; Innovation Users Group South Africa; E-research Africa and 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Library Technology Showcase, which was hosted in 2017 to share, explore and explain library technologies that provide easy access such as Nexus Current, the PressReader; predatory journals; Sierra scanning of items; and the future of information and communication technologies (ICTs) at Unisa (Unisa Library 2015:23; Unisa Library 2017:23).

#### **1.4 Problem statement and purpose of the study**

The problem statement has been identified and the purpose of the study has been clarified to give direction to the study.

##### **1.4.1 Problem statement**

A research problem refers to the problem chosen for investigation. It is identified as the first step in the research study that is informed by literature, the identified gaps and the general area of interest that motivates the researcher to start the investigation. The research problem addresses deficiencies in past literature. The following criteria inform the proposed research problem: contribution of the study to the body of knowledge; potential for further research; the relevance of the problem in the researcher's area of interest; access to necessary data; and ethical considerations. In academic research, the research problem is usually presented as a statement that addresses the research question to be investigated (Creswell & Creswell 2018; Ary *et al* 2018; Collis & Hussey 2014).

This study complies with the identified criteria because it is informed by literature in identifying the gaps in existing communication audit instruments - i.e. lack of recognition of the multicultural perspective in the auditing of communication in organisations; to address emerging communication challenges and complexities in organisations. The statement of the research problem is as follows: the existing communication audit instruments developed over time by various researchers are limited in terms of addressing new developments and current trends in South Africa, particularly at the Unisa Library, where the primary focus is on scholarly information resources.

#### **1.4.2 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study is to develop a measuring tool for integrated internal communication (IIC) at the Unisa Library.

The identified research problem as stated in Paragraph 1.4.1 has led to the need for the development of a more recent and new measuring tool that is adequate to evaluate the strength and weaknesses of the integrated internal communication system of the Unisa Library, raising awareness on the communication needs of employees and the Library (Koning & De Jong 2006).

Dawson (2016:45) refers to the purpose of the research as the research aim, which is a simple and a broad statement of intent that describes what the research intends to achieve. The aim should be supported by the research objectives that give direction by answering the five “W”s: what, who, why, when and where.

In addition, Creswell and Creswell (2018) posit that the purpose statement should contain the central phenomenon being explored, the participants and the research site. This study identified the central phenomenon, i.e. the IIC, the

participants, who are the Unisa Library employees, and the research site, which is the Unisa Library on the Muckleneuk Campus.

## 1.5 Research question

A research question is a clear, concise and complex question that provide an “explicit statement” of what the researcher wants to investigate (Dawson 2016; Bryman 2016:7; Collis & Hussey 2014). A research question also describes construct/s; unpack the research problem; and provide the scope of the research (Burns & Grove 2009; Badenhorst 2007). Creswell and Creswell (2018) regard a construct as referring to the characteristics or attributes of an individual or an organisation that can be measured. In this study, the main research question that stemmed from the research problem is: What is the most adequate tool for measuring integrated internal communication in the Unisa Library?

The research sub-questions are identified in Table 1.3.

**Table 1.3: Research sub-questions**

Research sub-questions	
RQ1	What methods for measuring integrated internal communication exist in the literature?
RQ2	What constructs contribute to the measurement of integrated internal communication based on existing perspectives?
RQ3	What communication systems are employees exposed to in the organisation?
RQ4	What are the emerging trends/latest developments in the field of organisational communication that should be added to the new measuring tool?
RQ5	What does empirical research/existing literature provide in terms of the measurement of integrated internal communication?

(Source: Author’s fieldwork)



## **1.6 Objectives of the study**

Research objectives are the means by which the researcher intends to achieve the aim of the research. Research objectives usually range from five to ten specific statements that describe how the research problem will be addressed (Dawson 2016). Welman, Kruger & Mitchell (2005) believe that the goal of any research project is to explain phenomena such as human behaviour in organisations, while De Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delport (2011) indicate research objectives as specifying issues that need to be explored. In this study, the concept of integrated internal communication will be explored in relation to human behaviour.

In line with the purpose of the study, as highlighted in Paragraph 1.4.2, the main objective of this study is to develop a measuring tool for integrated internal communication for the Unisa Library. The process involves the adaptation of the four traditional instruments – namely the CSQ, the ICA, the OCS and the CIT – to include the latest developments in the field of organisational communication.

The main sub-objectives of the study are to:

- Conduct a theoretical exploration of internal integrated communication audits;
- Conduct a theoretical review on internal communication audits;
- Explore the communication needs of employees;
- Explore the internal communication systems; and
- Explore the latest developments in the field of organisational communication; and propose a new measuring tool for integrated internal communication.

## **1.7 Relevance of the topic to the field of organisational communication**

The research topic is relevant, in that it addresses the internal communication challenges faced by organisational communication researchers in the field of organisational communication, specifically in the Unisa Library. As

communication in organisations is not static, new developments should be accommodated to meet the changing internal communication challenges, such as inadequate funds for ICT infrastructure; the lack of personnel ICT training; lack of user awareness of ICT potential; negative attitude of management towards ICT; and power outages as experienced in the Bangladesh university libraries (Crino & White 1981; Siddike, Munshi & Sayeed 2011).

Regardless of the familiarity in the exploration of the communication audit instruments worldwide, the existing instruments should be refined to make them relevant to different environments. This study focuses on measuring integrated internal communication in the Unisa Library, taking cognisance of existing trends. This study avoids duplication of previous studies, as previous literature was explored (Clampitt & Girard 1993; De Vos *et al* 2011).

## **1.8 Relationship of the topic to the discipline of communication**

The topic of this study originates from the field of organisational communication, which is a sub-discipline in the field of communication. Angelopulo and Schoonraad (2006:26) identify the following fields of communication that exist within the broader discipline of communication: organisational communication, business communication, management communication, corporate communication, public relations and marketing communication.

This topic falls within the field of organisational communication, which emerged in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and gain popularity in the sixties and seventies. The field consists of external communication with stakeholders and internal communication, which focuses on the transmission of internal communication, consisting of channels and procedures that guide the communication process for the achievement of organisational goals (Angelopulo & Schoonraad 2006; Johansson 2007; Njomo 2013).

The field of organisational communication has two streams: communication as a mechanistic phenomenon, with the focus on communication components and properties, and communication as a social, interactive, adaptable and transactional phenomenon, which focuses on the role of communication in the existence of people as social beings. In this study, communication will be looked at from the perspective of the latter phenomenon with the focus on communication between employees as social beings in an organisation, specifically at the Unisa Library (Angelopulo & Schoonraad 2006).

Based on the foregoing discussion, it can be deduced that the investigation of communication that takes place in organisations should follow the scientific ways of gaining knowledge, which involves the interaction between employees, organisational practices and the internal stakeholders (Ruane 2005). Such interaction, which enhances relationships, is closely linked to the communication needs of employees that should be investigated by using a measuring tool that addresses the latest developments in the field of organisational communication.

## **1.9 Delimitation of the study**

The focus of this study is limited to all communication that takes place in the internal environment of the Unisa Library, between staff members, who are identified as the internal stakeholders in the Library. The delimitation is in line with the definition of integrated internal communication.

## **1.10 Conclusion and chapter demarcation**

This chapter provides the background to the dissertation and demarcates the study. Background to the study entails the description of key concepts as they relate to the context of the study and the unique environment of the Unisa Library from which the purpose of the study emanates. The purpose of the

study, which focuses on the development of a measuring tool for integrated internal communication for the Unisa Library, was informed by the problem statement. The achievement of the purpose will be guided by the research objectives; the research questions and sub-questions; the relevance of the research topic to the field of organisational communication; and the relationship of the topic to the discipline of communication. The theoretical and methodological approaches applied to this study are discussed in subsequent chapters of which the demarcation is as follows:

Chapter 2 focuses on the theoretical framework underpinning the study, namely: the excellence theory, which is the metatheory to this study, complemented with the information and the media richness theories. The three theories direct, inform and lay the foundation for the proposed theoretical model and the development of the questionnaire or measuring tool that will be used to collect data in the Unisa Library.

Chapter 3 involves the literature review on internal communication audits by providing an overview of the international and South African perspectives. The chapter also identifies and evaluates the existing internal communication audits. Considering the complexity of organisations, emerging trends that should be considered in evaluating the communication of an organisation in an integrated manner are identified, including emerging trends in South Africa.

Chapter 4 proposes the theoretical framework for the integrated internal communication audit. This chapter forms the core of the study, as it reviews the existing internal communication audit instruments and gives details on how the proposed measuring tool for the Unisa Library was actually developed.

Chapter 5 discusses the methodology used to conduct the investigation by using the research onion to illustrate the research process followed to ensure the appropriateness of the research design. The exploratory sequential mixed method design, which combines the qualitative and quantitative research

methods, was used. The research methodology is informed by the existing literature.

Chapter 6 analyses and interprets the qualitative data collected by means of interviews. The interview schedule was used to conduct semi-structured interviews with members of management. Interviews were transcribed before transferring the data into the ATLAS.ti software package, which was used to analyse qualitative data. The results were used to refine the proposed measuring tool that was used to collect the quantitative data.

Chapter 7 analyses and interprets the quantitative data collected by making use of the IICA tool. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used to analyse the quantitative data. The results were used to inform Chapter 8 in answering the research question.

Chapter 8, which is the concluding chapter, addresses the research questions and answers the research problem. This chapter also provides concluding remarks and makes recommendations for future studies. The graphical representation of the chapter demarcation is shown in Figure 1.3.

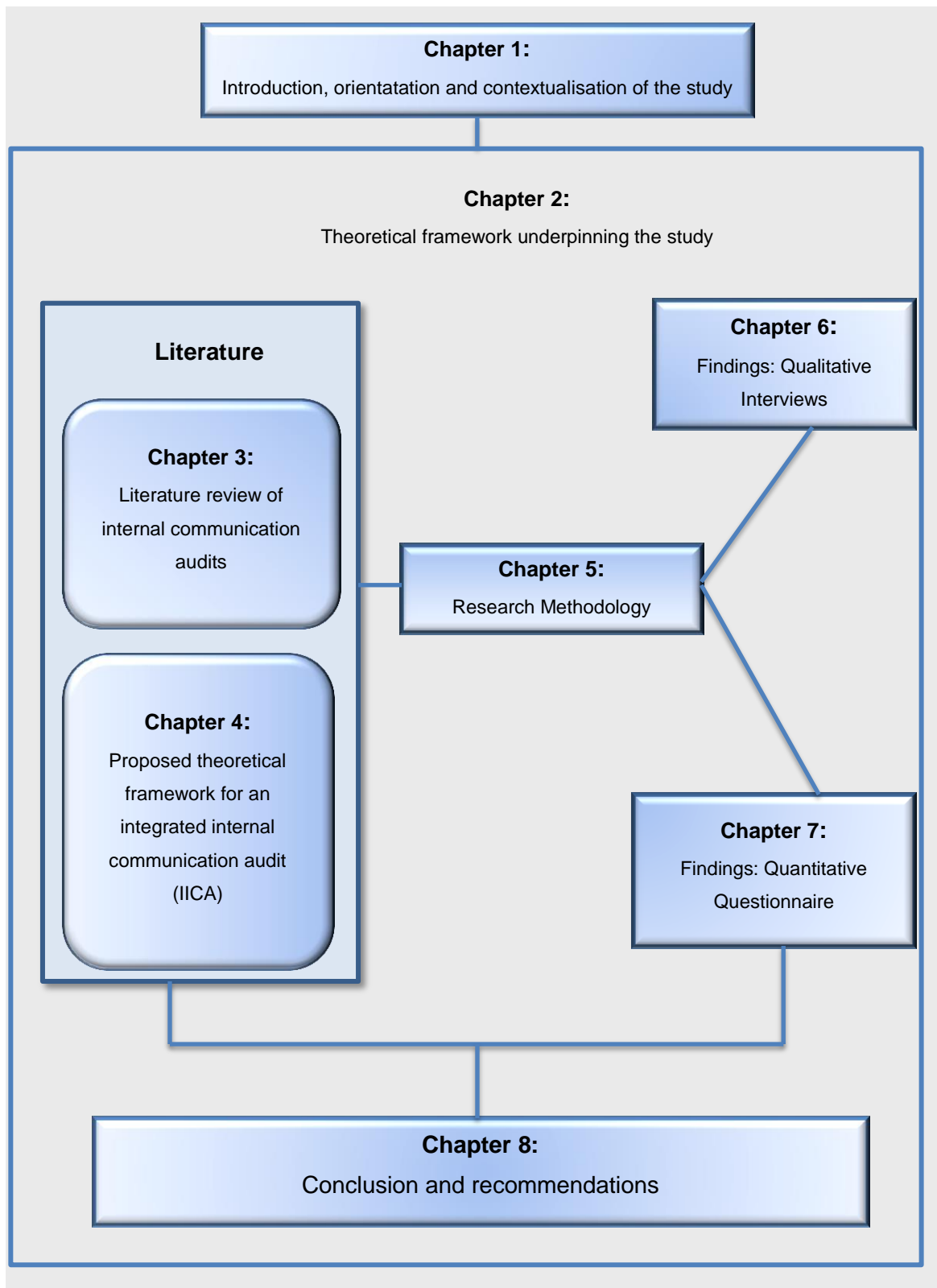


Figure 1.3: Chapter demarcation (Adapted from Greeff 2012:22)

## **CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Chapter 1 described the background and the rationale of the study. This chapter provides the theoretical framework that underpins the study. The chapter is structured as follows: the importance of theories, internal communication theory development, the excellence theory, the information theory, the media richness theory and the strength and weaknesses of the identified theories.

### **2.2 The importance of theories**

Theories are sets of interrelated constructs formed into propositions or hypotheses that present an explanation of some phenomenon. They take the form of an argument, a discussion, a figure, a rationale or a conceptual framework that explain a phenomenon. Theories are used to explore the research question (Ary *et al* 2018:2; Creswell & Creswell 2018:52). They also provide the basis for testing established theories and for generating new theory. Grunig's excellence theory is based on the believe that theories are subjective, because they are based on evidence and constructed to make sense of reality (Ruane 2005; Grunig 2013).

Theories become a framework for an entire study, in that they inform the research questions and the data collection procedure (Creswell & Creswell 2018). In this study, theories are important, because they provide guidance on the way in which to address research questions and they form the basis for testing existing theories that inform communication audits. The following three theories inform the proposed theoretical model adopted in this study: the excellence theory, the information theory and the media richness theory.

## **2.3 Internal communication theory development**

Theoretical developments that guided research in communication include Shannon and Weaver's 1960 meta-theoretical perspective. This mathematical theory of communication, which is referred to as the *information theory*, was based on a two-way symmetrical communication worldview. According to this theory, information flows freely between systems (Grunig & White 1992).

Hasel (2011) is of the opinion that the main criticism against this theory is that the model is linear, in that it involves the transmission of signals from the source to the receiver. Men (2014) argues that symmetrical communication facilitates dialogue between the organisation and its employees. Horn (2014) also criticises Shannon and Weaver's linear communication model for being simple and compatible only to electronic media and not to other channels, and for giving only the sender of the message decision-making powers. Blazenaite (2011) and Lunenburg (2010a) argue that the process should be directed at more than the delivery of the messages, so as to include an effective organisational communication process that provides feedback.

The excellence theory, which is a general theory of public relations, was then identified as the most relevant theory that addresses communication issues in an organisation. Ruck (2015) asserts that two-way communication should be introduced to fill the gap created by one-way communication that presents the management position and fails to give employees the voice that they expect.



## **2.4 The excellence theory**

The excellence theory was used as a metatheory for this study, as it encompasses most of the other theories and the internal communication theories were used as the baseline for the integrated internal communication approach (Grunig 2008).

### **2.4.1 *The development of the excellence theory***

The excellence theory results from the excellence study that identifies a grand theory of public relations, in an attempt to answer the following questions: “How, why and to what extent does communication contribute to the achievement of organisational objectives?” (Grunig & Grunig 2011:3). The theory consists of the elements of integrated marketing communication that consider horizontal and vertical communication in organisations. The theory also integrates theories of organisational communication, sociology, psychology and the situational theory with the public relations theory, adding the concepts of knowledge, shared expectation, organisational structure, participative culture, systems of internal communication, gender, diversity of the workforce and activism to the theoretical construction (Grunig 2013).

It is posited that the internal communication system of an organisation comprises of various communication processes, both formal and informal, that enables the transmission of information within the organisation, making use of a variety of channels ranging from electronic to verbal and nonverbal (Communication system 2015). It can be argued that the organisational communication theory and the situational theory contribute to the internal communication system of an organisation, as the earlier addresses the communication behaviour of an organisation and the latter addresses the communication behaviour of individuals in an organisation (Grunig 2013).

The organisational communication theory, which is a segment of the excellence theory, identifies the factors that influence internal communication as independent constructs (Grunig 2013). The following factors have been identified: the organisational structure, which enables the flow of information within the organisational hierarchy; information sharing between employees; the amount of information received and sent; timeous flow of information; employee communication competence or skills; proper feedback in the communication processes; leadership and management styles that promote effective distribution and the use of information; successful selection of a relevant channel; communication barriers such as differing values; the integration of communication systems; organisational communication values; effective choice of formal or informal communication networks; and the determination to create a communication system that allows synergy in interaction, including the emotional and social needs of employees (Chmielecki 2015; Grunig 2013; Hargie & Tourish 2009).

In this study, the identified factors are recognised as building blocks that provide guidance in the development of a measuring tool for integrated internal communication for the Unisa Library. The concepts identified by this theory will enrich this study by providing guidance on factors that contribute to the constructs that inform the measuring tool. For example, employees' knowledge should be shared within the organisational structure and this involves the flow of internal communication between diverse employees. This theory further provides guidance on the excellent communication behaviours that should take place between the organisation and individual employees and between employees themselves.

#### **2.4.2    *Relevance of the excellence theory to integrated internal communication***

The excellence theory is of specific relevance to integrated internal communication, because it is based on the belief that, in order to survive,

organisations must behave in a way that solves problems and satisfies the goals of internal stakeholders (employees) and management and should communicate symmetrically to cultivate long-term relationships resulting in employees' satisfaction with their jobs and with the organisation. The two-way symmetrical communication is based on the belief that individuals should adjust their ideas and behaviour to those of others in their communication process (Grunig 2013).

Since the excellence theory emphasises organisational effectiveness, integrated internal communication (IIC) has been identified as an important contributing factor in organisational effectiveness, because it assists the organisation in achieving its goals (Grunig & Grunig 2011). Studies that support this theory include those of Wagner (2013) and Fill (2013), who indicate that the excellence theory of public relations recognises feedback as important in promoting the two-way symmetrical communication directed at building long-term relationships between the internal stakeholders in the organisation.

Subsequently, the excellence theory has been recognised as the driving force behind effective communication, which should consist of the following elements of the communication process: the communicator or source of information; the message; the medium or channels; the receiver of information; and the feedback (Hasel 2011; Cheney, Christensen, Zorn & Ganesh 2011). Men (2014:6) further posites that "an ideal communication system is open, two-way, responsive, invite feedback, address the opinions and concerns of employees, collaborative and nurture employee satisfaction".

Emanating from the foregoing discussion, the excellence theory has been considered as a metatheory in this study, complemented by the information theory and the media richness theory.

## **2.5 Information theory**

The information theory is a science of information that originated from a paper on mathematical theory of communication published by Shannon and Weaver in 1948, with the book being published in 1949. This theory seeks to close the gap in Shannon's model of communication by answering the question as to whether the information generated by the source will be delivered to the receiver as desired (Woodward 2014; Yeung 2012; Pierce 2012).

The information theory is recognised as a field of research that provides a universal measure of the amount of information sent or transmitted over the communication channels from one point to another, often in an environment of noise and interference. Measurements are conducted with written, spoken language, electrical, mechanical transmission of messages and the behaviour of people (Pierce 2012).

The theory regards information as an absolute quantity that is independent, dimensionless and distinct from knowledge. Information has been looked at in terms of "scarcity" in transmission without paying attention to the value of such information. The concept of information has been defined from the statistical perspective as "the result of choice" (Brillouin 2013:9). The information theory focuses on sources of information; the channels that transmit the information in a communication system; and measuring the amount of information needed or required in the communication system of an organisation to solve the communication problems. The human perspective of information focuses on quantity and ignores the value of information (Grunig & White 1992; Gray 2011; Woodward 2014). This study recognises and explores the sources of information; the amount of information; and the channels or media used to transmit information in the library.

Hence, it is argued that the information theory plays an important role in the internal communication of an organisation, as it facilitates the transmission of information about daily operational activities, decisions, policies and any other important information. This theory also promotes trust relationships between management and employees by transmitting information through communication channels such as staff meetings, noticeboards, emails and newsletters. The information theory also encourages the increase in the flow of information that promotes a sense of belonging, characterised by employee commitment in organisational activities (Verčič, Verčič & Sriramesh 2012; Engin & Akgöz 2013; Njomo 2013; Horn 2014).

In an internal communication system, the flow of formal communication follows a prescribed chain of command, is regulated and enforced in facilitating the transmission of information such as policies, reports, procedures, manuals, strategic goals and objectives and any other information. Communication flows through communication channels that are used to transmit information or to store information in a memory device. Formal communication channels are transparent and encourage the motivation of employees, but prevent the free flow of personal or unofficial information that usually takes the form of a grapevine, which occupies 75% of information flow and perceived by most employees as reliable than formal communication. Organisational structures may become a substitute of communication channels when they transmit spontaneous or unplanned communication in an organisation (Ivancevich, Konopaske & Matteson 2011; Brillouin 2013; Horn 2014; Robbins, Judge, Odendaal & Roodt 2009).

The information theory influences the directional flow of information in an organisation, which takes downward and upwards directions. Employees often receive information through downward communication from individuals in top levels of the hierarchy or management. Downward communication is regarded as the most common in organisations and takes the form of job instructions and directives on how to execute specific activities, job descriptions, performance

feedback, departmental progress reports, information, messages and socialisation (Lunenburg 2010a; Hargie & Tourish 2009; Hasel 2011; Cheney *et al* 2011).

Hargie and Tourish (2009) and Fill (2013) indicate that information flows from managers in the form of the corporate vision, rewards, strategies and values to employees. Interaction between managers and employees in the communication process also includes the flow of communication on organisational roles that takes the form of planning, organising, commanding, coordinating, controlling and persuading employees towards the achievement of organisational goals. Managers should embrace the involvement, participation and proactive communication from employees, because that is key to their success.

Information also flows upwards from subordinates to superiors. Such information determines the extent to which subordinates understand the information sent through downward communication. Upward communication builds open relationships between employees and management, which often results in staff retention. Upward communication may take the form of suggestions for improvement, performance reports, financial information, grievances, disputes and complaints (Canary 2011; Hasel 2011; Stredwick 2014).

Developments in the information theory focus on the rates of communication from many senders of information to many receivers of information in the presence of noise and interference. The social media, which consist of internet-based tools and platforms that allow individuals to create content and facilitate conversation and networking, have been identified as one the developments in the information theory that can be used for interaction between employees in an organisation (Pierce 2012; Wilkinson & Weitkamp 2016:131). Examples of such platforms include email, Twitter and LinkedIn, which allow the exchange of information between a number of people.

In this study, the information theory will provide guidance in the development of the IICA in terms of the sources of information; the channels used to facilitate the flow of information between managers and employees in the internal communication system of the Unisa Library; and in measuring the amount of information required in the communication system of the Library to solve the communication problems.

The flow of information cannot be discussed in isolation from the channels that facilitate such a flow. The role played by the information theory in the communication system of an organisation is directly linked to the role played by the media richness theory, which focuses on the richness of the communication media or channels.

## **2.6 Media richness theory**

The concept of media richness, as defined in Chapter 1, also serves as a theory in this study. The media richness theory focuses on the communication channels used in the organisation – in particular, the task-media fit – to make sure that the chosen medium is capable of sending rich information, such as face-to-face meetings. It is postulated that face-to-face communication builds rapport; provides control over a situation and the message; provides the opportunity to draw on the resources that support the discussion; and facilitates informal interaction. Barriers to face-to-face communication include lack of time and interest (Hargie & Tourish 2009; Eisenberg 2009; Wilkinson & Weitkamp 2016:58).

The media richness theory points out the richness in information posed by different mediums and allocates mediums along the richness continuum based on the following four characteristics: immediacy of feedback or interactivity; the use of verbal and non-verbal cues; the use of natural language; and personal focus. The richness of the medium is guided by the following rule: if the richness

of the medium is high, then the information dissemination is better and if the richness is low, uncertainty in information dissemination is high. Media choice can be affected by factors beyond the richness of the medium, such as the potential for feedback and other environmental factors such as noise that inhibits the effective transfer of messages and may take the form of viruses that affect emails (Dennis, Valacich, Speier & Morris 1998; Hasel 2011; Men 2014; Chang, Liang, Chou & Lin 2017). This theory will complement the excellence theory by providing guidance on the communication channels that should be considered in the development of a measuring tool for the Unisa Library.

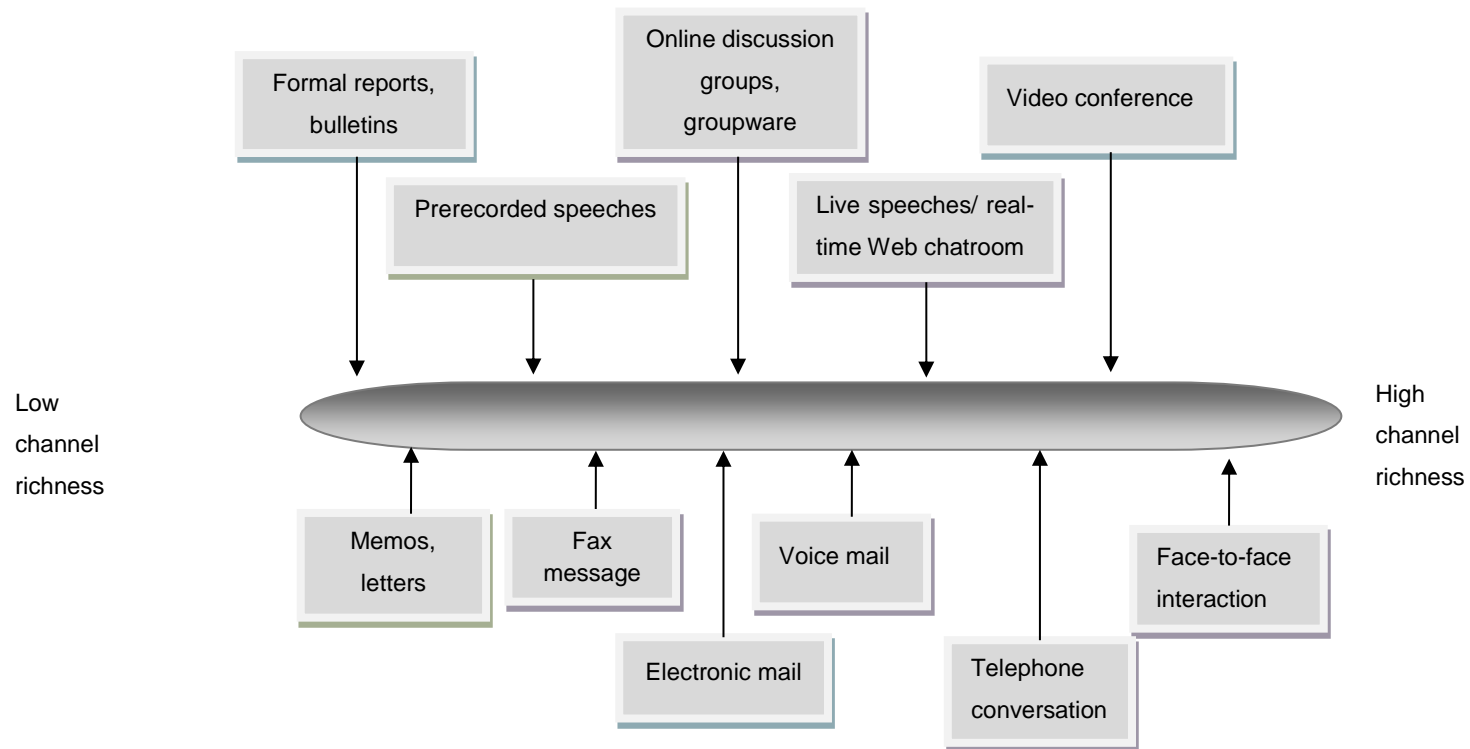
Although Hasel (2011) argues that there is no worst or best method of communication, Miller (2006) believes that the choice should be guided by the nature of the task at hand, while Hargie and Tourish (2009) consider the task-media fit as important in ensuring that there is a fit between the chosen communication channel and the task at hand. Tasks with high levels of uncertainty require rich channels, such as face-to-face communication, and tasks with low levels of uncertainty require a relatively lean channel, such as written communication (Miller 2006). In addition, Cheney *et al* (2011) argue that individuals prefer channels that offer media richness.

The measuring tool should focus on establishing whether the chosen channels of communication actually do transmit the desired amount of information. Effective communication channels should meet three challenges, in that they should: handle emergencies; disseminate day-to-day information; and present a realistic vision of the organisational environment (Hargie & Tourish 2009).

The channels are ranked in order of richness, as guided by the media richness theory, ranging from the very high-in-richness medium, which offers the ability to adjust messages according to real-time feedback, to the very low-in-richness or lean medium, which offers standardised information to a large audience (Dennis *et al* 1998; Cheney *et al* 2011).



Figure 2.1 provides a model on the richness of communication media or channels.



**Figure 2.1: Information richness of communication channels (Adapted from Cheney, Christensen, Zorn Jr. & Ganesh 2011:371)**

The media richness theory recommends face-to-face as the richest communication medium in the hierarchy, followed by video, voice and text. Face-to-face communication has the capacity of processing ambiguous communication; the ability to reproduce the information sent over it; and it may facilitate the organisation's symmetrical communication and immediate feedback, which have been identified by researchers (Downs-Hazen 1977; Woldearegay 2013; Nikolic, Vukonjanski, Nedeljkovic, Hadzic & Terek 2013; Tsai, Chuang & Hsieh 2009) as an important construct for an internal communication audit (Hasel 2011). Woldearegay (2013) further asserts that rich media are natural: the richer the medium, the more satisfying the communication is likely to be.

Face-to-face communication takes the centre stage in internal communication and has been recommended as the richest medium, because it is effective in solving complex issues and sending multiple cues, such as body language and facial expressions; can be used in different environments and in situational and personal situations. Due to its media richness, face-to-face communication is superior to other forms of communication (Ishii 2005; Miller 2006; Hasel 2011; Men 2014; Chang, Liang, Chou & Lin 2017).

Email and other written media, which are regarded as less rich and lacking the personal touch, are unavoidable, because they build trust relationships between subordinates and supervisors and allow access to information long after it has been received. Email provides instant messages and, although it is convenient in communicating task-related activities, it is not recommended for use by senior managers, due to their decision-making and strategic leadership roles at executive levels, which require direct interaction. Young employees use email more often and senior managers are less likely to use email than junior managers. Experienced email users are positive about the communication climate of an organisation (Ishii 2005; Byrne & LeMay 2006; Hasel 2011; Steele & Plenty 2014; Men 2014).

Developments in the field of organisational communication indicate that online social media networks such as Facebook, MySpace, WAZZUB, discussion forums and blogs are recognised channels of communication that should be incorporated in the communication channel strategy of organisations to ensure effective internal communication (Barker 2013; Meredith 2012). Cowan (2017) recognises social media as powerful and transparent channels that promote the sharing of formal and informal communication and that change the dynamics of communication and relationships in organisations from a place of work to a community of people at work.

This study is relevant, as Byrne and LeMay (2006) confirm that little empirical research has examined whether employees are satisfied with the communication they receive through different media.

The media richness theory assists this study by providing guidance in exploring the communication channels used in the Unisa Library to identify the preferred and the most effective channels that offer media richness in the communication system. In this study, the communication channels will be regarded as independent constructs that measure the amount of information transmitted in the Library.

## **2.7 Strength and weaknesses of the identified theories**

The excellence theory was chosen as the main or metatheory informing this study, based on the following reasons: it recognises the organisational structure, culture, gender and the system of internal communication; facilitates the two-way symmetrical communication; and promotes long-term relationships that provide a feedback loop through the sharing of messages between internal stakeholders in the organisation. The excellence theory also recognises the role played by managers in the communication of an organisation (Grunig 2013).

In addition to the advantages of the excellence theory, Eisenberg (2009) advocates the need for transition and expansion of organisational communication theories from the 20<sup>th</sup> century theories, which have been criticised for being immoral, unethical, based on hierarchy, the transmission of top-down information and management controlled activity, to the 21<sup>st</sup> century theories shaped by cultural variations and environmental complexities. He argues that the proposed theories should include non-western voices and experiences that can be achieved through research in relevant areas that involve cultural and gender issues. In exploring the internal communication of the Unisa Library, new emerging concepts will be considered, as they may contribute to the development of a measuring tool.

In terms of the information theory, Hargie and Tourish (2009) argue that factors that influence the flow of information in the internal communication of an organisation does not only influence, but may limit the extent in which information flows in an organisation. The gaps in the flow of information in organisations have been identified by Cheney *et al* (2011), who argue that organisational members often complain about the absence of downward communication and the lack of information relevant to their jobs, resulting in speculation and unnecessary stress. Subsequently, Brillouin (2013) indicates that the information theory focuses on the measurement of the quantity of information and ignores the value of such information.

The media richness theory provides guidance in this study in terms of the communication channels that provide rich information and the need to consider the task-media fit when choosing the channel for communicating specific messages, such as emergencies, day-to-day messages or the organisational vision. According to this theory, a rich medium has the capacity of processing ambiguous communication; reproducing the information sent over it; and may facilitate immediate feedback. The drawback of the media richness theory is that it overemphasises the richness of the media without taking information or message overload into consideration (Chang *et al* 2017).

It is posited that, while the media richness theory recognises the communication channel as rich in terms of the transmission of quality information, the excellence theory identifies real-time feedback as important in facilitating the two-way symmetrical communication. Subsequently, it is argued that the three theories acknowledge that two-way symmetrical communication facilitates relationships between internal stakeholders; the flow of information; and that the richness and the appropriateness of the media are important for the IIC of an organisation. In this study, the three theories provide guidance in the development of the measuring tool by identifying the channels that can be used to transmit the flow of information through the two-way symmetrical communication in facilitating relationships in the internal environment of the organisation.

## **2.8 Conclusion**

This chapter discussed the three theories that underpin this study and identified the excellence theory as the metatheory. Theories that complement the excellence theory include the information theory, which focuses on the flow of information in the organisation, and the media richness theory, which categorises communication channels according to their richness, characterised by immediacy in feedback or interactivity; the use of verbal and non-verbal cues; the use of natural language; and personal focus.

The next chapter will explore the existing literature on internal communication audits.

## **CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION AUDITS**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The preceding chapter discussed the theoretical framework that underpins this study. This chapter presents the literature review to provide background information on previous findings of different studies conducted on internal communication audits. Existing literature was used to provide insight and guidance in terms of the theoretical framework, research strategies, methodology for data collection and analysis, measuring instruments used and research findings and the identification of areas of knowledge to which the study is intended to expand.

The literature review will assist in understanding the research problem and in justifying the way in which this study fits into the broader debates against the backdrop of previous research conducted on internal communication audits. The chapter is structured as follows: internal communication audit perspectives, existing internal communication audits, critical analysis of existing internal communication audits, the integration of communication audits, relevant emerging trends that contribute to integrated internal communication audits and the trends in South Africa.

### **3.2 Internal communication audit perspectives**

The internal communication audit perspectives discussed in this study include the international and the South African perspectives.

### **3.2.1 Background**

The internal communication audit has been considered imperative for effective communication in organisations. Communication audits are used to assess the communication needs of employees and they take the form of periodical checks on communication practices and relationships between employees and management (Clampitt & Down 1987; Hargie & Tourish 2009; Woldearegay 2013).

The purpose of the internal communication audit is to assess the current performance and to devise improvement strategies by exploring better utilisation of communication, technology, time and information resources; enhance employee morale and the advancement of an organisation in line with current trends (Du Plooy 2009). In recent years, the focus of communication audits has shifted to include the study of power relationships, participative culture, the diversity of the workforce, organisational structure, organisational communication systems and gender (Hargie & Tourish 2009; Grunig 2013). This was necessitated by the need to identify the realities held by employees; to explore individual perceptions of communication; to explore the gaps in communication systems and channels; and to identify the common understanding of organisational life (Hargie & Tourish 2009).

The choice of communication techniques is central in any communication audit, as each audit should be tailored to the unique context in which it occurs, which includes the needs of the organisation that should be compared with the available audit tools. Audit tools take the form of measuring instruments that range from survey questionnaires, focus groups, critical incidents or experiences of employees and interviews. Measuring instruments are used to seek the views of employees on the best mechanisms that can be used to improve the effectiveness of communication in the organisation. Feedback on results obtained from such instruments will convince employees that their views are taken seriously, which, in turn, will raise their general level of communication satisfaction (Stredwick 2014; Hargie & Tourish 2009).

Organisational communication researchers conducted a number of studies on communication audits in a number of countries and organisations, making use of measuring instruments, including the Downs-Hazen CSQ (1977) and the ICA audit (1977), which were recognised as multi-dimensional construct instruments. These instruments should be refined and adapted to meet the ever-changing organisational needs (Hecht 1978; Crino & White 1981). According to Woldearegay (2013), the refinement process should focus on the development of a standard instrument or scale that measures communication behaviours in organisations. Therefore, the focus of this study is the development of a measuring tool for integrated internal communication (IIC) for the Unisa Library, based on constructs that ensure consistency and accuracy.

Historical reviews on internal communication audits serve as a source for focusing on a topic and avoiding irrelevant and outdated topics; refining the research question; and avoiding duplications, deficiencies and obstacles of previous studies (Walliman 2011; De Vos *et al* 2011). Subsequently, previous research indicates how a study adds to the large body of existing literature; provides information on the gaps in literature; and gives an indication where little previous research has been conducted, assisting with the relevant constructs that inform data collection and conducting pilot studies in areas where there is a need (Mouton 2001; De Vos *et al* 2011; Creswell & Creswell 2018). This study will be enriched by findings from previous research that will assist with the relevant constructs informing the measuring tool.

The next section provides a chronological development of internal communication audits and the development and advancement of measuring instruments used by organisational communication researchers from both international and South African perspectives.



### 3.2.2 International perspectives

Most of the studies on internal communication audits were conducted by international organisational communication researchers of which a summary of the most relevant is provided in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1: International studies on communication audits**

Contribution to internal communication audits	Researcher/Source
Defines <i>communication satisfaction</i> as “the personal satisfaction a person experiences when communicating successfully”. This definition informs the communication needs of employees at the Unisa Library.	Thayer (1968:144)
Developed the original CSQ as an assessment instrument, based on eight dimensions. The instrument has been considered a primary source of reference and will be adapted to the development of a measuring tool in this study.	Downs & Hazen (1977:63)
Recommends the CSQ as being thorough in assessing communication satisfaction.	Hecht (1978:363)
Conducted a study at Nashville Public Schools to address the lack of empirical data on communication satisfaction in educational institutions. The Downs-Hazen CSQ was successfully used and findings revealed a correlation between the communication constructs and the identified factors within the education system. Educators were satisfied with the school’s communication system, but there was a need for improvement in the communication of policies, goals, changes, feedback and the communication climate.	Nicholson (1980:111)
View communication satisfaction as an individual’s satisfaction with various aspects of the communication taking place in the organisation and recommend the eight dimensions presented in the Downs-Hazen CSQ as comprehensive, well received and applied by a number of researchers. Organisational communication has changed from a uni-dimensional to a multi-dimensional construct	Crino & White (1981:835)

<b>Contribution to internal communication audits</b>	<b>Researcher/S ource</b>
that should be refined to meet the ever-changing organisational needs – i.e. employees need more communication from their managers. The adaptation of the measuring instrument was promoted.	
Adopted the Downs-Hazen CSQ to assess strategic and communication audits and the findings revealed that employees want access to important information; access to superiors; and explanation of policies. The CSQ was identified as a valid measure of the communication needs of employees.	Clampitt & Downs (1987:2)
The CSQ questionnaire provides a uniquely theoretical and empirically sound method of gathering information about organisational communication. It has proven useful in a variety of organisational settings and cultures such as a government agency, hospitals and clinics, a university, government, business, urban and rural schools, social services, and a teaching hospital.	Hamilton (1987:114).
The CSQ was recommended as a short and understandable instrument and has been used in a wide variety of organisations. However, inter-departmental communication and top management communication were not addressed; the factor validity of the instrument could be improved.	Greenbaum, Clampitt & Willihnganz (1988:254).
Research findings in most research using the Downs-Hazen CSQ revealed that job satisfaction and performance were highly related to communication satisfaction and the instrument has proven to be useful in different countries, organisations and among different types of workers.	Clampitt & Girard (1993:85)
A study conducted to review instruments for measuring organisational culture in healthcare services recognised organisational culture as a subject of study. Recommendations revealed that a single measuring instrument was unlikely to provide a valid, reliable and trustworthy evaluation of an organisational culture. A multimethod approach should be adopted, considering the nature of what is under investigation.	Scott, Mannion, Davies & Marshall (2003:924)
The findings of the quantitative study conducted in a major	Gray &

Contribution to internal communication audits	Researcher/S ource
<p>Australian retail organisation revealed the CSQ as being valid for measuring communication satisfaction and that employees hold different levels of satisfaction for various organisational communication dimensions or factors. A qualitative study was recommended to address the changing cultural, political and technological environments.</p>	<p>Laidlaw (2004:426)</p>
<p>A communication audit was conducted at the Belfast Police to address the impact of change. A triangulation approach was used consisting of structured interviews, the ICA questionnaire consisting of five-point Likert-type rating scale adapted by Hargie and Tourish in 2000 and the critical incident approach. Findings revealed the ICA as being central in monitoring transition during the change process in organisations. The findings further revealed that 95% of changes were caused by the external environment – particularly change in the political climate. Formal and informal channels created by structures within sub-divisions or units in the organisation have yielded positive communication prospects. Employees desire more information, openness, directness and action on information passed. The triangulation approach consisting of the qualitative interviews and the ICA audit proved to be useful in identifying employee needs and in detecting the impact of changes in the political environment.</p>	<p>Quinn &amp; Hargie (2004: 155)</p>
<p>An overview of the ICA audit revealed that the instrument is comprehensive and performs well as an analytical tool. However, findings revealed problems with the communication from management and that employees want less information from informal channels. Relationship with supervisors was identified as important to employees and positive feedback was exchanged horizontally between colleagues and subordinates. The ICA audit was useful in identifying the communication gaps and the following constructs were recommended: relationship with supervisor, feedback and informal channels of communication.</p>	<p>Downs &amp; Adrian (2004:136)</p>
<p>Concluded in their study that the Downs-Hazen CSQ is an appropriate instrument that employees can use to evaluate aspects</p>	<p>Koning &amp; De Jong</p>

Contribution to internal communication audits	Researcher/S ource
of organisational communication.	(2006:25)
<p>Evaluated the CSQ as an audit tool. The CSQ was converged with the CIT to assess the quality of communication within three large organisations. The merits and restrictions of the CSQ were examined by comparing the CSQ results with results gathered with the CIT. Based on the findings, the CSQ was recommended as an appropriate instrument for evaluating aspects of organisational communication, but less suitable to diagnose specific communication problems and formulating recommendations. The CSQ appears to have criterion validity, but fails to address the issues of decision-making, top-down and bottom-up communication, responsibilities and the extent to which organisations keep rules and agreements that appear to influence employees' overall levels of communication satisfaction. They were critical of the content validity of the instrument and cautioned researchers not to use the instrument in its present form as that may result in misdiagnosis.</p> <p>The CSQ must be complemented with other instruments – preferably qualitative (audit) instruments, such as the CIT, focus groups, or indepth interviews. If used as the only audit instrument, questions need to be added to the CSQ, addressing the additional issues. The study identified gaps in the CSQ and recommended the adaptation of the instrument, which included the use of triangulation.</p>	<p>Zwijze-Koning &amp; De Jong (2007:261 &amp; 280)</p>
<p>The ICA communication audit was applied to an urban communication system to evaluate the organisation's communication system with the purpose of improving the communication practices and organisational effectiveness. The objective was to determine the amount of information over or under-load; evaluate information sources and the quality of relationships; and to identify the communication incidents and experiences, describing patterns of actual communication. The CIT was used to complement the ICA. Recommendations indicated that citizens were involved in civic activities and participate in various roles. The study provides guidance in terms of the following constructs that can be</p>	<p>Jeffres (2008:258)</p>

Contribution to internal communication audits	Researcher/S ource
considered in this study: the amount of information, information sources, the quality of relationships and the communication incidents.	
Identified the following four of the eight dimensions developed by Downs and Hazen (1977) as the most effective factors that result in effective work relationships: organisational productivity, performance and customer orientation; supervisory communication; communication climate; and co-worker and personal feedback communication. The recommended constructs adopted from the CSQ yielded positive results on measuring specific areas in organisational communication.	Tsai, Chuang & Hsieh (2009:825)
The findings of this study revealed that the use of informal communication processes in organisations, such as the grapevine, harm the satisfaction of employees.	Abdollahi, Ali, & Kandlousi (2010:58)
Communication satisfaction involves a two-way flow of communication between executives and employees. Employees are satisfied when they raise their opinion in the decision-making process and when they are involved in meetings and interact with management. The Downs-Hazen CSQ was used to measure communication satisfaction of employees at the Garanti Bank and was recommended as a successful research stream in organisational communication. The study identified the following needs of employees: participation in decision-making; interaction with management; and involvement in meetings.	Engin & Akgöz (2013:110)
A study was conducted in the Addis Ababa Civil Service (Ethiopia) to develop and validate a hybrid measurement of organisational communication satisfaction. A large number of organisational communication instruments were acknowledged, but not considered, due to their incompatibility to the study. Three instruments were considered based on content, context, relevance and psychometric quality: the CSQ, the ICA audit and the organisational communication development (OCD) audit questionnaire. The CSQ scale was recommended as highly reliable	Woldearegay (2013:118)

Contribution to internal communication audits	Researcher/S ource
<p>and a valid measure of employee communication satisfaction. The following four dimensions of the Downs-Hazen CSQ were considered as being effective in measuring communication satisfaction: communication climate; supervisor communication; co-worker communication; and personal feedback, in addition to job satisfaction and relational trust from the other two instruments. The study also recognises the cultural context as important in communication satisfaction. A two-factor model of communication satisfaction, consisting of 17 items of the relational and informational dimensions, was recommended as reliable with an overall coefficient alpha generally high at .94; the relational dimension at .93 and the informational dimension at .87. The study considered the following two constructs as reliable in measuring internal communication: relational and informational.</p>	
<p>A web-based study was conducted at 131 Serbian companies. The seven dimensions of the Downs-Hazen CSQ were used to measure internal communication satisfaction. Out of the 320 web-based survey questionnaires distributed to middle managers, a total of 256 managers responded and the findings revealed that employees were satisfied with communication from supervisors and with feedback. Employees prefer to learn from their mistakes and supervisors are willing to listen to complaints from employees. The following constructs were recommended: communication with supervisors and feedback.</p>	<p>Nikolic <i>et al</i> (2013:564)</p>
<p>An internal communication audit was conducted at a higher education institution (HEI) using a triangulation approach, consisting of interviews, questionnaires and critical incident analysis. A questionnaire was based on the CSQ and the ICA audit. The CIT focused on analysis of positive and negative incidents. Findings revealed that the CIT provides meaningful insight into the problems existing in the organisation, confirmed what was acknowledged by the questionnaires and the interviews and validated the research results or conclusion. A triangulation approach consisting of the</p>	<p>Carvalho (2013:363)</p>

Contribution to internal communication audits	Researcher/S ource
qualitative interviews, the ICA audit and the CIT were recommended.	
Conducted a study at a public sector water utility in Trinidad and Tobago by using a survey questionnaire to establish supervisor-subordinate communication competence and job and communication satisfaction. Findings revealed that employees are moderately satisfied with organisational communication. Issues or factors impacting on employee satisfaction included: trust, cultural congruence, societal influence, organisational culture and learning, relationship among workers, supervisor verbal aggression. The following constructs that impact on internal communication were recommended for further exploration: organisational culture, societal influence, trust, learning, relationship among workers and supervisor verbal aggression.	Steele & Plenty (2014:17)
Conducted a study by using the CSQ and the CIT, which is a communication audit instrument used to diagnose communication problems and uncover the strength and weaknesses or unique communication problems of the communication systems in three secondary schools. Findings revealed that the CSQ and the CIT complemented each other and that employees seemed perfectly satisfied with their isolated school site, without experiencing communication problems.	Zwijze-Koning & De Jong (2015:54)
A study conducted at the China branches of multinational companies to address communication challenges resulting from the diversity of cultures used the eight constructs of the Downs-Hazen CSQ, complemented with the intercultural communication sensitivity scale (ISS), technology usage scale (TUS) and organisational communication conflict instrument (OCCI). Findings revealed that the cultural construct was identified as useful in the internal communication audit.	Mao & Hale (2015:138)
A study conducted at the General Administrative Department of a higher education institution in Romania focused on transformation to address the impact of internal organisational communication with	Daniela & Janetta (2015:139)

<b>Contribution to internal communication audits</b>	<b>Researcher/Source</b>
administrative staff and to detect communication barriers that may cause malfunctioning. The 45 scale communication model proposed by Katz Kahn (1978) was used. Findings revealed that internal organisational communication is influenced by perceptions of employees and the use of two-way communication networks, such as the email and the intranet. Trust relationships were developed when supervisors and employees share opinions, suggestions and expectations related to work and complaints. Informal communication is also carried out through existing communication channels. The study identified email and the intranet as the most effective communication channels. Trust relationships and informal channels were also identified as important constructs in the internal communication audit.	

### **3.2.3 The South African perspectives**

Studies conducted in the South African library environment included studies conducted at the University of the Western Cape by Mila (2011) and Hart (2010), focusing on job satisfaction in South African libraries. These studies serve as an indication that little research has been conducted in South African libraries, particularly in tertiary institutions. South African organisational communication researchers, who have shown interest in communication audits, are summarised in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2: South African studies on communication audits**

<b>Contribution to internal communication audits</b>	<b>Researcher/Source</b>
Nhlapo conducted a study on the role of communication satisfaction in job satisfaction in the Department of Communications, making use of the qualitative research method to measure the communication constructs developed by Downs-Hazen (1977). The	Nhlapo (2000:65)



Contribution to internal communication audits	Researcher/ Source
<p>following six constructs were recommended as relevant for measuring communication satisfaction: organisational integration, personal feedback, communication climate, organisational perspective, media quality and relationship with the supervisor. Gaps identified in the Department's communication system included: the lack of organised communication structure and medium; poor information sharing between supervisors and subordinates; and the lack of information on departmental changes and developments. Supervisors felt disempowered due to lack of communication about the department. The study recommended that the CSQ constructs can be used in a qualitative approach and may be useful in identifying the communication gaps in the communication system of an organisation.</p>	
<p>Conducted a study at the National Development Agency by using the mixed method (qualitative &amp; quantitative) to establish the effectiveness of the communication audit in measuring all communication-related elements and integrated communication. Findings revealed that the integrated communication audit does not measure the level of integration of communication comprehensively. Recommendations included the development of an instrument that can measure the actual levels of integration of communication to allow organisations to optimise operational and strategic objectives of the organisation. The study encourages the development of an instrument that measures the integration of communication. This will assist in developing a measuring tool for measuring communication in an integrated manner.</p>	<p>Antonis (2005:239)</p>
<p>Adapted and tested the Downs-Hazen CSQ at a private higher education institution in South Africa. Findings revealed that the instrument was relevant in measuring communication satisfaction, but that further research should refine the instrument to address the multicultural environment in South Africa, thereby ensuring its reliability. A qualitative study should precede the Downs-Hazen CSQ to establish management communication problems in</p>	<p>Meintjes &amp; Steyn (2006:186)</p>

Contribution to internal communication audits	Researcher/ Source
organisations. Those recommendations inform the need for this study and the exploration of the qualitative study that precedes the survey method.	
As a way of taking forward recommendations by Meintjes and Steyn (2006), Jensen, Papastefanou and Conradie (2013:144) conducted a study in South African companies and government departments to describe interactions or relationship between the prevalent cultural dimensions of employees and internal organisational communication satisfaction. They introduced the cultural dimension in organisational communication satisfaction as an independent construct and communication satisfaction as a dependent construct in their study. The CSQ was used as a conceptual and theoretical framework. The findings revealed that the cultural dimension of employees impacts on communication satisfaction. They recommended that communication practitioners should conduct internal audits in South Africa to determine employees' prevalent cultural dimensions; the relationship of those dimensions with communication satisfaction; and the way in which organisations organise information. The construct of Ubuntu is recommended, as it plays a significant role in communication satisfaction within the South African work context. The study recommended the cultural dimension and the construct of Ubuntu (People First) as important constructs in internal communication.	Jensen, Papastefanou & Conradie (2013:144)
Conducted a study in selected public hospitals in the City of Johannesburg. The CSQ was recommended as a valid measure of communication satisfaction. Findings revealed that employees were dissatisfied with the absence of effective two-way communication; the lack of information on government; the regulatory framework; and the changes in health care service.	Wagner (2013:141)

The foregoing discussion on the international and the South African perspectives on communication audits indicated that researchers make use of different communication audit instruments in addressing communication

problems in organisations and institutions. This study identified the existing internal communication audits and the relevant constructs that informed the proposed measuring tool in this study.

### **3.3 Existing internal communication audits**

The study identified the existing internal communication audits that inform the development of the proposed measuring tool.

#### **3.3.1 *Background on existing internal communication audits***

An internal communication audit is an evaluation tool that identifies the main strengths and weaknesses of the communication system of an organisation (Hogard & Ellis 2006). Internal communication audits provide managers with knowledge of what is happening at the communication level, which includes the what to communicate, how to communicate, whom to communicate with and those involved in the communication of the organisation. It also assists managers in decision-making and enables them to plan a clear path for improved performance by identifying existing practices that require change (Hogard & Ellis 2006; Oliver 2004).

The evaluation process is not only confined to the needs of employees, but involves other aspects and processes of the internal communication system of the organisation that need improvement. These include the identification of communication problems, such as lack of information, faulty communication channels, lack of supervisory communication, poor communication, unproductive meetings and delays in the communication processes (Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2015; Hogard & Ellis 2006; Quinn & Hargie 2004).

The concept of an internal communication audit covers a wide variety of data collection techniques or methods, such as survey questionnaires, interviews,

network analysis and the CIT. Academics and consultants prefer surveys, because they are easy to develop, administer and interpret (Hogard & Ellis 2006; Oliver 2004; Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2007).

Oliver (2004) argues that evaluation tools are not a one-size-fit-all approach: communication audit instruments should be tailored to the specific needs of the organisation under review, because the needs of organisations differ. Previous studies identified certain recurring themes that should be considered when conducting communication audits, which include: the role of supervisors or immediate line managers; change and employees; information sharing; and the use of face-to-face channels.

Existing research indicates that using existing instruments that have substantial evidence of validity and reliability in different populations have been proven to be more cost-effective than developing a new instrument. However, most of the instruments on communication audits were developed in the seventies and applied by researchers worldwide (Chalmers, Liedtka & Bednar 2006; Kimberlin & Winterstein 2008; Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2007), but limited research has been conducted since then. The validity and reliability of existing instruments to the Unisa Library context is questionable, given the time that has elapsed and the changes in organisational conditions as organisations and the population have evolved over time.

The following existing instruments for conducting internal communication audits are identified as the most relevant to this study:

### **3.3.2 *Communication satisfaction questionnaire***

The Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ) has been identified as a relevant instrument in this study based on the following discussion:

### 3.3.2.1 Background on the development of the original CSQ

The CSQ was developed by Downs and Hazen in 1977, in order to discover the relationship between communication and job satisfaction and to measure the degree of the overall satisfaction, perceived by employees in the total communication of an organisation, considering a series of recurring communicative behaviours (Downs & Hazen 1977; Rubin, Palmgreen & Sypher 1994; Meintjes & Steyn 2006; Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2007; Jensen, Papastefanou & Conradie 2013; Wagner 2013; Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2015).

The CSQ is a seven-point Likert-type scale that consist of eight dimensions. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the eight dimensions has been consistently high as presented in Table 3.3 (Meintjes & Steyn 2006).

**Table 3.3: Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the original CSQ**

Dimension	Cronbach alpha coefficient
Horisontal communication	0.766
Relationship with subordinates	0.907
Communication climate	0.843
Relationship with superiors	0.925
Personal feedback	0.827
Organisational integration	0.793
Media quality	0.9
Corporate perspective	0.821

(Meintjes & Steyn 2006:168)

The Downs-Hazen CSQ consists of 40 items that measure the satisfaction of employees with communication, relationships, channels and the communication climate in an organisation. The test-retest reliability of the CSQ was reported as positive at .94 and the construct validity was determined by using a factor analysis and was reported as satisfactory (Downs-Hazen 1977). According to Salkind (2018), construct validity examines the extent to which a test score reflects the underlying constructs.

### **3.3.2.2 Strength and weaknesses of the original CSQ**

The CSQ was recognised as being thorough in assessing employees' attitudes and judgments of several communicative practices, as they influence the behaviour of employees in an organisation (Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2007).

The effectiveness of the CSQ was tested and confirmed in a number of studies and the reputation of the instrument has attracted the attention of researchers worldwide (Nicholson 1980; Crino & White 1981; Clampitt & Downs 1987; Clampitt & Girard 1993; Tsai, Chuang & Hsieh 2009; Nikolic, Vukonjanski, Nedeljkovic, Hadzic & Terek 2013; Steele & Plenty 2014; Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2007; Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2015).

According to Gray and Laidlaw (2004:428), the CSQ was identified as "comprehensive" in assessing the directional flow of information, promoting relationships in the organisation and the use of formal and informal communication channels, while Abdollahi *et al* (2010) used the instrument and identified informal communication, such as grapevine, as a barrier to communication that harms the satisfaction of employees.

Although some of the previous studies recognise constructs that comprise other measurement instruments such as the ICA, the OCDA, the CIT and the OCCI, the constructs contained in the CSQ were considered superior due to their success in auditing communication from a multidimensional perspective. The constructs of the CSQ serve as a barometer of organisational functioning and a useful tool in the audit of organisational communication. The instrument has been frequently used for measuring organisational effectiveness (Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2015; Downs-Hazen 1977; Gülnar 2007).

The effectiveness of the eight factors of the CSQ in assessing organisational communication makes the instrument popular in analysing communication processes in organisations. The CSQ was considered the primary research tool

in dissertations and theses and was translated into a number of languages such as Chinese, Dutch, German, Japanese, Spanish and Turkish, making it possible for the instrument to be used in South Africa, particularly in this study. (Rubin, Palmgreen & Sypher 1994; Gülnar 2007).

Previous studies indicated that researchers recognised, applied, adapted and complemented the Downs-Hazen CSQ with other instruments such as the ICA audit, the CIT and the OCDA to address the identified gaps that includes the lack of recognition of cultural diversity that affects internal communication in organisations (Woldearegay 2013; Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2015).

When evaluated against the CIT, the CSQ covers the same ground as the ICT questionnaire, but in a more manageable manner (Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2007).

The CSQ is relevant to this study, as it applies the information theory by facilitating the directional flow of information, making use of the formal and informal communication channels and promoting trust relationships.

### **3.3.2.3 The adapted CSQ**

The relevance of the CSQ to this study is influenced by a number of studies that tested and adapted the instrument successfully in different countries, organisations and environments (Clampitt & Girard 1993).

Meintjes and Steyn (2006:171) adapted the eight dimensions of the CSQ into three constructs, namely: informational, relational and informational/relational before applying them in the South African context and assured researchers that the adapted CSQ was reliable and credible. The adaptation process involved the combination or merger of dimensions as presented in Table 3.4.

**Table 3.4: The adaptation process of the CSQ**

Original dimensions	Adapted dimensions
Organisational integration	Informational construct
Corporate perspective	
Media quality	
Relationship with subordinates	Relational construct
Horizontal communication	
Personal feedback	Informational/Relational
Communication climate	
Relationship with supervisor	

**(Meintjes & Steyn 2006:171)**

The final adapted CSQ consisted of the following changes: items were reduced from 40 to 31; the scale was reduced from a seven-point to a five-point scale; and the scale was also turned around, 1 being negative and 5 being positive. Some of the questions were rephrased to improve grammar and to ensure the logical flow of the questionnaire. Some of the questions were either deleted, due to the length of the questionnaire; combined due to their similarity and to accommodate organisational needs, such as the absence of unions in the organisation being evaluated (Meintjes & Steyn 2006).

In their study, Meintjes and Steyn (2006:181) recognised the contribution made by other researchers on the application of the CSQ in different contexts and conditions worldwide, as presented in Tables 3.1 and 3.2 respectively (Hamilton 1987; Greenbaum, Clampitt & Willihnganz 1988; Crino & White 1981). Meintjes and Steyn (2006) recommend the instrument as being useful in the South African educational environment, as it is brief and understandable to respondents. However, the reliability of the CSQ is not affected by the adaptation of the questionnaire to the South African conditions, as confirmed by the Cronbach's alpha coefficients, which proved to be satisfactory, as presented in Table 3.5 (Meintjes & Steyn 2006:169).



**Table 3.5: Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the adapted communication satisfaction constructs**

Construct	Cronbach alpha coefficient
Informational	0.906
Relational	0.83
Informational/relational	0.932

**(Meintjes & Steyn 2006:169)**

The adapted CSQ constructs will be applied in this study, as they are recommended as valid measures of internal communication in the South African environment. The constructs will be adapted further to address the communication needs of the Unisa Library.

### **3.3.3 The International Communication Association (ICA) audit**

The study identified the ICA as an important instrument for measuring internal communication based on the following discussion:

#### **3.3.3.1 Background in the development of the ICA audit**

The organisational communication division of the International Communication Association developed the ICA audit over a period of five years (1971–1976), as a package of instruments used to assess employees' perceptions of the communication processes in the organisation. The final instrument was developed in 1977 under the leadership of Goldhaber and Krivonos to address communication problems, such as information deficits, poor communication channels, poor flow of information, unproductive meetings and the power of informal communication, such as rumours. The following key issues that need to be considered in conducting a communication audit have been identified: the quality of information; the sources of information; the communication channels; the communication relationships; information problems and restrictions; and positive and negative communication experiences, which have been considered

a core construct of the CIT (Downs & Adrian 2004; Rubin, Palmgreen & Sypher 1994; Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2007).

The ICA provides the following guidance in terms of the methodology for conducting audits: preliminary interviews that explore the opinions of the employees and managers, followed by the pilot or pretest for detecting the problems involved in the implementation of the questionnaire. The final survey can then be distributed to respondents, followed by analysis and interpretation of data (Downs & Adrian 2004; Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2007).

#### **3.3.3.2 Strength and weaknesses of the ICA audit**

The ICA audit has been used extensively in research and recognised as comprehensive in unveiling critical incidents in the communication of an organisation (Gülner 2007; Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2007; Hogard & Ellis 2006; Goldhaber 2002; Rubin, Palmgreen & Sypher 1994). In contrast, the ICA audit has been criticised for being very long, impractical and failing to analyse the structure, networks and the environmental context of an organisation; hence the need to refine and adapt it to the needs of the organisation being evaluated. The ICA audit has also been criticised for the lack of guidance on procedures to be followed when conducting data analysis and developing recommendations based on the results of the study (Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2007; Downs & Adrian 2004; Rubin, Palmgreen & Sypher 1994).

The ICA audit has been considered a multi-instrument approach for auditing the communication behaviour of organisations, with the objective of standardising the procedure for assessing organisational communication systems. Emphasis is placed on the assessment of employees' perceptions of the communication process of an organisation through surveys and interviews. Web-based or online communication surveys have also proven to be effective (Goldhaber 2002; Rubin, Palmgreen & Sypher 1994; Woldearegay 2013). Downs and Adrian (2004) remind researchers that the ICA audit can be used in conjunction with other methods, but warn that the replacement of the Likert-type scale

makes it difficult to compare data from the new and the old audits. The ICA audit factor structure consists of eight dimensions that have received high internal consistency scores as indicated in Table 3.6 (Rubin, Palmgreen & Sypher 1994:193).

**Table 3.6: Factor analysis of the original ICA audit**

Key Dimensions	Items
Information received	Organisational performance Personal performance Policies and benefits
Information sent	Upward communication in the form of reports Complaints Requests for more information
Follow-up	Follow-up and amount needed
Sources	Sources from which information can be received: individuals from within one's unit, co-workers, departmental meetings, formal management presentations and grapevine
Timeliness	How timely are one's colleagues/peers and subordinates? How timely are one's superiors/ management?
Organisational communication relationships	Supervisor Top management Co-workers Personal influence on decision-making and policy making in the organisation
Organisational outcomes	Organisational effectiveness Personal achievement
Channels	Media Phone/memos Face-to-Face Publications Bulletin Board Channels

**(Rubin, Palmgreen & Sypher 1994:193)**

### 3.3.3.3 The adapted ICA audit

Downs and Adrian (2004:136) adapted the eight dimensions of the ICA audit. The reliability scores are presented in Table 3.7.

**Table 3.7: The reliability coefficient of the adapted ICA audit**

Dimension	Reliability coefficient
Amount of information received	.88
Amount of information desired	.85
Amount of information sent	.83
Amount of information desired to send	.79
Amount of information received from sources	.70
Amount of information desired from sources	.76
Relationships	.90
Organisational outcomes	.88

**(Downs & Adrian 2004:136)**

In this study, the identified constructs will address some of the communication issues that are not addressed by the CSQ, such as organisational outcomes and the amount of information transmitted through different mediums. The ICA audit has paved the way for the development of a measuring tool for this study.

### 3.3.4 Organisational culture survey

The organisational culture survey (OCS) has been identified as an important instrument in this study. The role played by the OCS in the communication of an organisation is discussed below:

#### 3.3.4.1 Background on the development of the OCS

The OCS is based on the concept of organisational culture, as described in Chapter 1. The instrument addresses shared meanings held by organisational members as contained in rules, assumptions, beliefs, rituals, myths and values. Glaser, Zamanou and Hacker developed the OCS in 1987, based on the belief

that organisational cultures are created through shared symbols, ideology, beliefs, rituals, norms, self-definitions, roles and myths. A 36-items Likert-type scale was developed, consisting of six sub-scales. The test-retest was conducted and a satisfactory reliability for the sub-scales were confirmed, with the Cronbach alpha ranging from .63 to .91 (Denison, Nieminen & Kotrba 2014; Jarvis 2016).

The reliability of the OCS has been proven internationally. A study conducted in the Australian context with managers from the Australian Institute of Management using the OCS proved the OCS as reliable. An alpha coefficient of .99 was reported (Denison, Nieminen & Kotrba 2014). The OCS consists of the six factors presented in Table 3.8 (Rubin, Palmgreen & Sypher 1994).

**Table 3.8: Factors of the OCS**

<b>Sub-scales/ constructs</b>	<b>Items</b>
Teamwork	Coordination of effort, honesty, support, conflict resolution, teamwork, concern, cooperation, a feeling of open group communication
Morale	Good working relationship, motivation, respect for workers, fairness, feeling of being part of the family, trust, organisational character
Information flow	Sufficient information to do one's job, communication about the changes, contact with other work areas
Involvement	Input of ideas and participation in decision making, thoughts and ideas count and workers are encouraged by management to offer them
Supervision	Employees reporting on the amount, valence and clarity of their immediate supervisor's feedback about their work performance
Meetings	How productive and democratic meetings are?

**(Denison, Nieminen & Kotrba 2014:151)**

The OCS is important in this study, as informed by the international and the South African perspectives on internal communication audits. The cultural construct will be explored to address the multicultural challenges in the South African environment, such as the organisational character as embodied in the Library Charter that contains the Library values, the flow of information that communicates changes in organisations, involvement of employees in decision-making processes and the democratic nature of meetings (Clampitt 2009).

### **3.3.5 Critical incident technique**

The CIT was developed by Flanagan in 1954, consisting of the five stages, as presented in Table 3.9.

**Table 3.9: Five stages of the CIT**

Five stages of the CIT
Establishing the general aim of the activity
Setting plans and specifications (who is the observer and the respondent)
Collecting information by means of interviews using positive and negative incidents
Analysing information by grouping incidents into clusters
Interpreting and reporting findings

**(Carvalho 2013:363)**

According to Luker, Austin, Caress and Hallett (2000), the CIT focuses on relationships, communication flow, network contacts and decision-making.

The CIT focuses on discrete or extraordinary positive and negative communication incidents and experiences, which are assumed to affect or present employees' overall level of communication satisfaction, producing a range of communicative behaviours about which employees have positive or negative feelings. Employees are expected to describe each experience in

detail, focusing on what exactly happened, who was involved and what the effects have been (Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2007).

The technique provides detailed understanding into the communication processes of the organisation – particularly on whether information is exchanged adequately; how decisions are made; and the communication channels used to communicate important issues to employees (Downs & Adrian 2004). In addition, Zwijze-Koning and De Jong (2007) indicate that, when the CIT is applied in organisational communication, the type and character of the incidents to be collected should be clarified.

Organisational communication researchers use the CIT as a supplement to the CSQ, due to its effectiveness in allowing employees to reveal any incident or communicative events that had occurred; hence the exploration of the instrument in this study to provide guidance in the identification of constructs that inform the proposed measuring tool (Quinn & Hargie 2004; Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2007; Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2015).

Given the variation in the number of communication audit instruments used by communication researchers to evaluate the internal communication weaknesses and strengths, this study proposes a measuring tool that will address these issues at the Unisa Library. Table 3.10 outlines the studies that are identified as the most relevant to this study, given the constructs used to address the communication problems.

**Table 3.10: Summary of existing internal communication audits**

Instrument	Identified constructs/Dimensions	Researcher and year
Communication satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ)	Relational	Downs-Hazen (1977) as adapted by Meintjes & Steyn (2006:175)
	Informational/Relational	
	Informational	
International	Amount of information received	Goldhaber & Krivonos

Instrument	Identified constructs/Dimensions	Researcher and year
Communication Association (ICA) audit	Amount of information desired	(1977) as adapted by Downs & Adrian (2004:136)
	Amount of information sent	
	Amount of information desired to be sent	
	Amount of information received from sources	
	Amount of information desired from sources	
	Relationships	
	Organisational outcomes	
Organisational Culture Survey (OCS)	Teamwork	Glaser, Zamanou & Hacker (1987) as adapted by Denison, Nieminen & Kotrba (2014:151)
	Morale	
	Information flow	
	Involvement	
	Supervision	
	Meetings	
Critical incident technique (CIT)	Discrete or extraordinary positive and negative communication incidents and experiences manifested through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relationships</li> <li>Communication flow</li> <li>Network contacts</li> <li>Decision-making</li> </ul>	Flanagan (1954) as adapted by Carvalho (2013:363)

(Meintjes & Steyn 2006; Downs & Adrian 2004; Denison, Nieminen & Kotrba 2014; Carvalho 2013)

The critical evaluation of the existing internal communication audits provides motivation on why the four measurement instruments were considered in this study.



### **3.4 Critical analysis of existing internal communication audits**

The existing internal communication audits are analysed in this study to establish constructs that inform the development of the proposed IICA tool.

#### **3.4.1 Background**

Lessons learned from experiences of organisational communication researchers confirm the need for conducting this study, taking into account the fact that the study of internal communication audits examines how organisational context affects the personal and organisational lives of individual employees.

Existing literature (Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2015; Downs & Adrian 2004; Welch & Jackson 2007; Rubin, Palmgreen & Sypher 1994) indicates that, although internal communication audits are popular, they have received limited attention in South Africa. Amongst others, the limitations include an oversight by researchers to measure the most critical indicators of organisational effectiveness (Gray 2000). In this study, the development process of the IICA tool should identify the critical indicators, known as *communication constructs* that will be used to develop a measuring tool for IIC for this study.

Limitations of the internal communication audit result in the need for the refinement of the audit instruments, which is further influenced by the differences in cultural, political and technological environments that have proved that the one-size-fits-all approach does not apply in internal communication audit, as organisations differ in terms of their specific needs. To address this shortcoming, the existing communication instruments were explored to understand and unveil emerging trends with the intention to identify the most relevant constructs that address the communication of an organisation in an integrated manner (Gray & Laidlaw 2004; Oliver 2004; Engin & Akgöz 2013). A

critical analysis of the existing instruments provided guidance in understanding their relevance in this study.

### **3.4.2 Communication satisfaction questionnaire**

The existing literature indicates that the CSQ is widely recognised in different countries, organisations and different types of workers as a valid measure of communication satisfaction, due to its reliability and validity in assessing organisational communication (Clampitt & Girard 1993; Koning & De Jong 2007; Woldearegay 2013; Steele & Plenty 2014). However, the gaps identified include the need to refine the instrument to address the prevalent cultural dimension, societal influence and the multicultural environment, based on the diverse cultures in South Africa, which include the construct of Ubuntu (Meintjes & Steyn 2006; Jensen, Papastefanou & Conradie 2013; Steele & Plenty 2014).

The identified gaps have resulted in the need to refine, adapt and complement the CSQ with other instruments. A qualitative study preceding the CSQ has also been recommended for conducting an evaluation to establish management communication problems to address the ever-changing organisational needs (Gray & Laidlaw 2004; Crino & White 1981). In this study, the identified gap is of interest, because it has paved the way for the identification of context-related constructs.

Studies that have applied the recommendations for the refinement or adaptation of the CSQ include those of Nikolic *et al* (2013), who made use of a web-based survey. The findings revealed that employees were satisfied with communication from supervisors, who were willing to listen to their complaints. Steele and Plenty (2014) considered the cultural and societal aspects in organisations in a study conducted in Trinidad and findings revealed a decline in satisfaction. The findings raise questions as to whether culture impacts negatively on internal communication satisfaction.

As indicated in Table 3.1, studies conducted in 2015 by Zwijze-Koning and De Jong; and Mao and Hale showed the need to complement the CSQ with other instruments, such as the CIT, the ISS, the TUS and the OCCI. These studies recognised the cultural construct as useful in the internal communication audit, including the need to assess the perception of employees to establish whether internal communication is influenced by the perception of employees. This has given rise to the use of statistical tests, such as the Independent t-tests and the ANOVA tests that determine whether the views of participants on IIC differed based on their demographics such as gender, educational qualification or position. This study provided a shift in focus from internal communication audits to evaluate communication in an integrated manner, as proposed by Antonis (2005), who recommended the development of an instrument that measures the integration of communication.

South Africa needs studies that refine the instrument, looking at emerging trends affecting internal communication, such as gender and ethnicity, and addressing issues of diversity management and globalisation, which introduces changing social values in organisations due to immigration and cross-cultural marriages; telecommuting; technological advancement, which introduces integrated functional information systems in organisations; the need for customised and individualised services; and generational differences between younger and older employees (Priola & Hurrell 2011; Ehrenhard, Ruel & Bondarouk 2011; Mello 2011; Hasel 2011).

The original constructs developed by Downs and Hazen (1977) were recognised worldwide and were considered in this study for the development of an IICA tool.

The CSQ constructs that Meintjes and Steyn (2006) have adapted to the South African institution of higher learning and Woldearegay (2013) have adapted to the Ethiopian context were recognised as relevant to this study. This study will also respond to the call for the refinement of the CSQ by complementing the instrument with the ICA, the CSQ and the CIT.

### **3.4.3 *International Communication Association (ICA) audit***

The ICA audit was adopted in this study, because it is comprehensive in assessing employees' perceptions of the internal communication process and unveiling critical incidents in the communication of the organisation. The instrument enables a large number of respondents to be surveyed and has received high internal reliability scores (Hogard & Ellis 2006; Oliver 2004; Rubin, Palmgreen & Sypher 1994). The constructs that inform the ICA audit are congruent to those contained in the CSQ, which include: information received, information sent, follow-up, sources of information and relationships (Woldearegay 2013; Rubin, Palmgreen & Sypher 1994).

Although the ICA audit has been regarded as comprehensive in unveiling critical incidents, recommendations indicate that the instrument should be refined to address the length of the questionnaire. This study will take these recommendations into consideration (Goldhaber 2002; Rubin, Palmgreen & Sypher 1994; Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2007).

### **3.4.4 *Organisational culture survey***

Among a number of organisational culture instruments developed and identified by researchers, the OCS is considered as the most relevant to this study in addressing the multicultural context of the Unisa Library. This is because it seeks the respondent's ideas about the organisation and the communication relationships between the internal stakeholders, which are complementary to the focus of the CSQ and the ICA audit. According to Robbins *et al* (2009), the construct of organisational culture measures factors such as employees' perception of the organisation; the extent to which the organisation encourages teamwork; reward innovation; the degree of risk tolerance; and support for employees. However, the following constructs of the OCS survey have been identified: teamwork, morale, information flow, involvement, supervision and meetings (Denison, Nieminen & Kotrba 2014; Rubin, Palmgreen & Sypher

1994). Denison, Nieminen and Kotrba (2014) posit that further research should establish the validity of the OCS instrument and clarify the number of factors that should be considered when conducting audits.

Organisational culture often reflects the national culture that assists in aligning the internal communication of an organisation with the changes taking place nationally. An example is the transformation agenda in South Africa that is reflected in the Unisa Library strategies. Studies that recognise the cultural dimension or the multicultural perspective as an important construct that can complement the CSQ and the ICA include those of Meintjes and Steyn (2006); Jensen, Papastefanou and Conradie (2013) and Woldearegay (2013). The cultural context has also been considered an important construct in internal communication. The organisational culture construct will provide valuable information on the culture of the Library by addressing issues such as: the library values; diversity of employees; equality in employment; changes introduced by the transformation strategy; globalisation; and the information communication technology that mediates the internal communication of the Library.

#### **3.4.5 *Critical incident technique***

In this study, the CIT is recommended as an additional instrument that complements the CSQ, the ICA and the OCS – mainly due to its effectiveness in identifying extraordinary incidents in relation to employee experiences in the communication of an organisation (Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2007; Quinn & Hargie 2004). The CIT will assist this study with ideas on how best to enhance communication in the Library by addressing critical issues that are not addressed by the CSQ, the ICA and the OCS.

In addition to the measurement instruments identified above, it is necessary to highlight research initiatives that have adapted and integrated the constructs from different instruments in conducting a communication audit. Barker and Angelopulo (2006) state that there is no single ready-made evaluation

instrument for measuring integration as yet; hence the need to integrate the existing measurement instruments to assess communication in an integrated manner.

In addition to the critical analysis of the existing internal communication audits, it is necessary to explore the communication audits conducted in organisations undergoing change.

#### **3.4.6 *Communication audits conducted in organisations undergoing change***

This study identified two relevant examples of communication audits conducted in organisations undergoing change or transition. These examples are discussed in the following paragraphs:

A communication audit was conducted to assess existing information channels at California State University, Fullerton's Pollack Library. The purpose of the internal audit was to determine the status of internal communication, evaluating the strengths and weaknesses or inadequacies and identifying areas of improvement. The ICA survey was considered in the development of an online survey instrument, which comprised of a mixture of the seventies and eighties library audit methodologies. The findings confirmed that the internal communication audit is a valuable tool for libraries and academic departments during the period of change and uncertainty. The findings further revealed that the smooth flow of information reduces uncertainty and that the grapevine becomes prevalent with the lack of clearly defined formal conduits or channels (Chalmers, Liedtka & Bednar 2006). This example is particularly relevant to this study, because the Unisa Library is also faced with a transformation agenda.

In a study conducted in the Royal Ulster Constabulary Police Organisation in Belfast, Northern Ireland, which focused on addressing the challenges introduced during the change process, Quinn and Hargie (2004) established

that the internal communication audit plays a central role in monitoring transition in an organisation during the change process. Linke and Zeffass (2011) refer to transition as a change process that involves the transformation of organisational activities in reaction to environmental conditions. The study found that key success factors in the change process include a combination of effective internal communication, together with the recognition of social and cultural values. In this study, these aspects will be considered in the internal communication audit in the monitoring of the transformation agenda with which the Unisa Library is faced.

In previous studies, scholars (Gieselman 1968; Downs & Adrian 2004; Hogard & Ellis 2006; Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2015) have evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of the internal communication in organisations, but have paid little attention to the strengths and weaknesses of the specific data collection techniques. Empirical research into the validity and reliability of specific communication audit techniques prove to be limited in addressing organisational conditions; hence the need for more research to isolate and compare the contribution of individual audit techniques (Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2007). Against the backdrop of the limitation, Oliver (2004) suggests that the audit tool should be tailored to best fit the organisation being audited.

### **3.5 Integration of existing measurement instruments**

The concept of the integration of communication audits becomes central in the development of the IICA based on recommendations made by the following authors: Zwijze-Koning and De Jong (2015); Mao and Hale (2015); Carvalho (2013); Woldearegay (2013); Zwijze-Koning and De Jong (2007); Jeffres (2008) and Quinn and Hargie (2004), who complimented and/or converged one or more measuring instruments with the purpose of improving the validity and reliability of the measuring tool used. This supported Oliver's (2004) view that evaluation tools are not a one-size-fit-all approach; that they should be tailored to the specific needs of the organisation under investigation.

Integrating the organisational culture constructs, particularly the sub-construct of morale, which focuses on the perception of participants towards organisational values, morals and ethical conduct, with the communication audit constructs and the CIT will enhance the proposed IICA tool. In addition to the promotion of the multicultural aspect in the Unisa Library, the adapted constructs will also address the challenges posed by the political environment that introduces the transformation agenda in South Africa, which is adopted by the Unisa as part of the Strategic Plan.

Existing communication audits should be refined to ensure that they adapt to environmental changes to improve their validity (Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2007). This study integrates existing measuring instruments with emerging trends and proposes a theoretical framework that informs the measuring tool that can be used to measure the integrated internal communication in the Unisa Library. The measuring tool will be developed and tested through the following: exploring the methods for measuring organisational communication; identifying constructs that contributes to the measurement of internal communication; exploring the communication systems used to communicate with employees; exploring the latest developments in the field of organisational communication through a literature review; adapt/review existing measuring instruments for internal communication; and exploring the multicultural perspectives of an organisation versus the internal communication of an organisation.

Out of a number of measurement instruments identified from existing literature, this study adapts and integrated the following four instruments: the CSQ, ICA, OCS and the CIT. Due to the congruence of the identified constructs, which informs the measurement instruments, especially those that inform the CSQ and the ICA instruments, the IICA tool will merge constructs that address similar issues.

Due to their reliability in measuring internal communication as confirmed by communication researchers, the three constructs of the CSQ were adopted and considered the primary constructs in this study (Hecht 1978; Nicholson 1980;



Crino & White 1981; Clampitt & Downs 1987; Clampitt & Girard 1993; Nhlapo 2000; Gray & Laidlaw 2004; Koning & De Jong 2006; Meintjes & Steyn 2006; Tsai, Chuang & Hsieh 2009; Engin & Akgoz 2013; Woldearegay 2013; Wagner 2013; Nikolic *et al* 2013; Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2015). Consequently, the following are identified as key constructs for an IICA tool, designed for the Unisa Library: informational, relational, informational/relational, communication channels, organisational outcomes, organisational culture and the communication experiences. The adapted constructs will be applied in this study.

The next section focuses on relevant emerging trends that are considered as additional sub-constructs under the organisational culture construct.

### **3.6 Relevant emerging trends contributing to the construct of organisational culture for IICA**

Changes in communication are influenced by the emerging trends that affect organisations globally. Those trends introduce the 21<sup>st</sup> century sophistications and complexities that range from cultural differences and information communication technology innovations that impact on organisations and employees in one way or another (Botma 2017; Koschmann 2012; Hasel 2011). The emerging trends will be explored for the development of the proposed IICA tool.

In South African university libraries, complexities range from the need to transform the apartheid era landscape to a democratic one and the need for reform, innovation and restructuring to accommodate new opportunities for information sharing introduced by the global competitive climate (Ngwakwe 2014).

Potential sub-constructs that were explored to inform the organisational culture construct include the technological developments, globalisation, generational

differences, gender and ethnicity, cultural differences, the need for customised services and telecommuting.

### **3.6.1 *Technological developments***

An organisation's technology is the process of transforming inputs from the organisational environment into outputs, making use of equipments, tools, machinery, work procedures and employee knowledge and skills. Apart from mediating and enhancing internal communication, technological innovations were criticised for impacting negatively on the activities of the organisation. Some of the challenges include the replacement of employees with automation, resulting in employee reduction and a flat organisational structure with more technical workers, who can work in teams and projects (Botma 2017; Mello 2011).

Technological advancement affects communication styles, techniques and channels, resulting in shifts from the use of letters, telegraphs and manual telephones to electronic mobile phones and modern online communication networks, such as Facebook, Skype and video-conferencing. Smart phones are now connected to the internet and used for email communication. Changes in technology demand continuous change in work habits and upgrade of the skills of employees (Mello 2011; Hasel 2011). At the Unisa Library, retention of the best employees is based on current trends that dictate that the library and information profession is impacted by changes in information communication technology, infrastructure and innovations (Unisa Department of Library Services 2015).

Organisations such as Capital One, which is a banking and financial services organisation in Virginia, own an employee intranet called One-place and added a social networking site to allow employees to collaborate freely on issues ranging from their jobs, expertise, seeking advice and areas of interest whether personal or job-related (Mello 2011).

Information communication technology (ICT) plays an important role in the design of measuring instruments and, as such, functional information systems should be used together with organisational techniques to accommodate business processes to what the software can do, called integrated functional information system (IFIS). IFIS reduces uncertainty; minimises errors; promotes the sharing of information; and improves efficiency (Ehrenhard, Ruel & Bondarouk 2011). IFIS can be considered in the development of a measuring tool for integrated internal communication in the Unisa Library.

Botma (2017) observes the role of ICT from both sides of the coin and argues that technological innovations not only speed up global integration of the economy; they also create wealth and income inequality through the digital divide. Technology is also criticised for shaping people and organisations and not the other way round. The use of social media creates an internet culture that compels people to be available online. This study will explore the use of the online communication channels in addressing the communication channels construct identified by the ICA audit.

Innovations in the Unisa Library include the launch of the latest technology in 2014, which includes discussions on disruptive technology, and the 21<sup>st</sup> century employee. The outcomes of such discussions will inform the 21<sup>st</sup> century library needs. The Library has also advanced from the use of print resources to electronic and online resources (Unisa Library 2015).

Wilkinson and Weitkamp (2016:111) identified the use of mobile devices, such as mobile phones, as an emerging trend that is used worldwide and that changes the way in which information is accessed. Mobile devices are portable and available when one is on the move. The introduction of the PressReader in the Library in 2017, which enables the use of mobile phones to access information publicised, amongst others, in magazines and newspapers worldwide is one example of a technological development that contributes to the improvement in access to information.

This study recognises ICT as a sub-construct of the communication channels construct that mediates and enhances the IIC of the organisation.

### **3.6.2 Globalisation**

The concept of globalisation has emerged as a result of multinational organisations that consider change in order to adapt to diverse economic, political, social and market conditions they are faced with around the world (Mello 2011). Globalisation has been defined as a process that entails the intensification of transnational and transcultural integration of human and non-human activities and networks of which the non-human activities include information communication technology. People from diverse cultures, orientations, beliefs and backgrounds interact as a result of globalisation (Ledimo 2015; Botma 2017; Beck 2018). Organisations exist in a globalised world and they face the challenge of maintaining their identity and keeping up with the age by managing their communication processes strategically (Engin & Akgöz 2013).

Change is blamed for disrupting the status quo; particularly when communication with those who are affected or employees is poor. Communication fosters trust and prevents informal rumour in times of change (Mello 2011). The Unisa Library is not exempted from the impact of globalisation, in that it has branches in other countries, such as Ethiopia.

According to Botma (2017), globalisation is an interdisciplinary concept that involves different fields such as technological, political, economic and cultural dimensions. Information technology and technological innovations are regarded as the drivers of globalisation, because they mediate communication and connect people worldwide. Social media have been identified as the latest digitally mediated communication channel that gives people the platform to communicate online across national boundaries.

Gut, Wilczewski and Gorbaniuk (2017) blame progressive globalisation and the blurring of borders between nations, regions and ethnic groups for creating communication problems in global organisations. Globalisation also introduces changing social values in organisations; communication across cultures and nations; immigration and cross cultural marriages that make people from other countries to get employment in South Africa, specifically the Unisa Library (Hasel 2011; Priola & Hurrell 2011). As such, the Library must take cognisance of cultural differences that may impact on relationships and affect service delivery.

Due to globalisation, automated processes and services, new technological innovations and multi-cultural workforce, the Unisa Library is changing dramatically (Unisa Department of Library Services 2015:6). Therefore, globalisation affects internal communication in the Library, which necessitates strategies to communicate with its counterparts across national boundaries, in the midst of the political and economic restrictions between countries.

### **3.6.3 *Generational differences***

Employees in organisations are categorised into generations – i.e. they are grouped according to age. People from two or more generations may work together. The following five categories of generations have been identified in the workplace: traditionalists, who were born between 1925 and 1944; the baby boomers, who were born between 1945 and 1964; Generation X, who were born between 1965 and 1980; Generation Y, who were born between 1981 and 1994 and Generation Z, who were born between 1995 to date. The five generations are diverse in terms of their attributes. Managers face the challenge of understanding the strengths and weaknesses of each generation and implementing communication practices that complement the generational preferences, differences and similarities (Megan 2015; Wiedmer 2015; Brink, Zondag & Crenshaw 2015).

The five generational categories display different characteristics. The traditionalists tend to be loyal and committed to their jobs, characterised by high career aspirations and low turnover intentions. The baby boomers tend to be more competitive, question authority and strive to build a solid career. Members of Generation X tend to be more independent; they value time; adapt to change and distrust institutions. Generation Y is characterised by homogeneity and they tend to be realistic, cyber literate and value individuality (Megan 2015; Andresen & Lehmann 2017).

Different generations expect different types of communication techniques. Younger generations place emphasis on relationship-oriented aspects, while older employees prefer communication that focuses on tasks at hand. In addition to technological developments, such changes in societies affect the manner in which communication occurs within the organisation, whether positively or negatively. Organisations that do not accommodate the needs of the younger generations, such as the adaptation to new technologies, tend to fail (Priola & Hurrell 2011; Megan 2015). Brink, Zondag and Crenshaw (2015) identify generation as a sub-construct for the organisational culture construct.

The concept of generational differences contributes to the diversity of employees in terms of the characteristics associated with a particular age group. In this study, diversity has been recognised as a sub-construct of the organisational culture construct.

#### **3.6.4 Gender and ethnicity**

Gender originated from a cultural term that refers to individual identity based on distinguishable characteristics such as sex, which is associated with being masculine (male) or feminine (female) (Oakley 2016). Blessinger, Hoffman and Makhanya (2018) recognise changes resulting from diversity in gender that do not define individual identity in terms of sex, but recognise the following factors that influence sexual identity: race, ethnicity, national origin, beliefs,

socialisation, socio economic status, abilities and disabilities and educational achievements. The term *sexual orientation* has shifted in meaning to include lesbian, gay and bisexual. In addition to the masculine and feminine sexual identity, the term *gender* also includes cisgender, agender, bigender, transgender and gender fluid. *Cisgender* refers to gender identity that matches the sex assigned at birth. *Agender* refers to a person who does not identify with any gender, while *bigender* or *dual gender* is a gender identity that includes two distinct identities in one person or being both masculine and feminine. In terms of transgender, a person can decide to be a trans-man or a trans-woman, regardless of his/her sex at birth. *Gender fluid* refers to people whose gender identity is flexible or may change over time.

The term *ethnicity* refers to cultural differences and identity associated with activities such as language, geographical location and religion. In post-apartheid South Africa, ethnicity is defined in terms of power relations and class identity in which people belong to different ethnic groups as defined by their race and social class. Race is associated with the biological appearance in terms of skin colour, hair, hormones and other qualities that define the identity of a person, while social class is associated with the struggle for limited resources (Milton & Mano 2017).

The differences between employees – in terms of gender or ethnicity – should be addressed by introducing diversity measures and measures that address gender inequality in employment practices. Diversity management techniques and long-term communication strategies become imperative to prevent unforeseen emergencies (Parmegiani 2017; Priola & Hurrell 2011). The Library workforce consists of people who differ in terms of gender and ethnicity; hence the need to explore the impact of those differences on the communication system of the Library.

Gender and ethnicity address the diversity of employees, which is considered a sub-construct of the organisational culture construct in this study.

### **3.6.5 Cultural differences**

*Culture* is defined as a particular way of life, a period or a group that includes distinctive norms, beliefs, principles and ways of behaving that are combined to give each organisation its distinct character (Storey 2018).

In terms of the communication perspective, Fielding (1997) believes that cultural differences in organisations can be managed by creating an atmosphere of trust; learning one another's language; drawing a dictionary of terms or concepts used in the organisation; reconciling different approaches to communication; striving for the best communication in the organisation; encouraging face-to-face communication; and conducting discussions on the best approach to overcome culture differences. Leung and Morris (2015) assert that cultural differences influence the way work problems are resolved, because managers with different cultural backgrounds may have different understanding and explanations of work problems. In this study, cultural differences are considered a sub-construct of the organisational culture construct.

### **3.6.6 Need for customised services**

The concept of customer service emanates from the growing concern to meet the ever changing needs of customers. Denison, Nieminen and Kotrba (2014) recognise customer focus as important for organisational survival. The organisation must understand and react to customers and anticipate their future needs. This reflects the degree to which the organisation should be driven by a concern to provide quality services that satisfy customer needs. Service quality should meet the following characteristics: intangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy (Kuo, Chen & Cheng 2018).

Sabah, Chalabi & Turan (2017) indicate that customised services are heterogeneous, because the quality and nature of service vary from one person to another. Services that exceed customer expectations generate a favourable



quality perception and satisfaction. The Library Service Charter promotes the provision of quality information services that address the information needs of clients, which include the internal clients. The provision of such services should be customised to the diverse information demands of clients. In evaluating the nature of services rendered to clients, the Library launched the LibQUAL+ survey tool in August 2018. The LibQUAL+ is an international web-based survey tool that invites clients to voice their opinion on Unisa Library services with the intention of determining the services expected by users; users' perceptions of the quality of services received; and identifying the best practices in the library services as compared with other local and international libraries (Unisa Library 2018b).

When dealing with clients and their problems, employees should be flexible and responsive to competitive pressure, as clients are becoming more sophisticated and complex, demanding customised and individualised services (Mello 2011). Educators, researchers and students enter into new and emerging fields of study, seeking information from the library in areas that have never been dealt with before. This demands the involvement of employees in the customisation of the activities of the Library to the needs of clients. The introduction of LibQUAL+ survey has been identified as the best practice that will enhance the customisation of information services in the Library.

In this study, customised service is considered a sub-construct of the organisational culture construct that promotes excellence in the provision of information services in the Library.

### **3.6.7 Telecommuting**

Telecommuting was introduced by globalisation, advancing digital technologies such as cellular phones, fax machines and personal computers, and the competitive work environment that has changed the nature of the workplace in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The term *telecommuting* was first used by Jack Nilles in the seventies in an attempt to minimise traffic congestion and lessen pollution in the

environment. In the eighties, a small number of pilot programs were conducted in the United States. In the mid-nineties, the number of telecommuters increased with many federal, state and private sector organisations supporting the practice of telecommuting. The concept gives workers some flexibility and improved work-life balance (Narayanan & Menon 2017).

Narayanan and Menon (2017) define *telecommuting* as an alternative work arrangement given to employees to work from home or at a satellite office, a hotel, or any other place besides the traditional office setting. Many organisations have adopted telecommuting as a critical part of the human resource strategy and a way to achieve financial and human resource goals and objectives, while some organisations see telecommuting as fulfilling the corporate social responsibility. The use of telecommuting involves managing people, managing information, managing teams and managing facilities (Narayanan & Menon 2017).

The following benefits of telecommuting are identified: as telecommuting increases, traffic volume and congestion decrease; home-based telecommuting reduces fuel use; decreased vehicle miles travelled and vehicle hours travelled; reduces air pollution; and decreases accident rates. The reduction of air pollution or emission results in improved air quality, which has a positive effect on climate change. Telecommuting gives employees a high degree of autonomy, in that they can work anywhere, anytime and at any place that makes them productive. The organisation can save on office space and rent costs. Statistics indicate that IBM reported saving US\$75 million by selling buildings and reducing its leased office space (McCune 1998), while Ernst and Young was able to save US\$ 25 million annually by reducing office space by two million squares (Shabanpour, Golshani, Tayarani, Auld & Mohammadian 2018; Narayanan & Menon 2017). However, Masuda, Holtschlag and Nicklin (2016) indicate that telecommuting has a negative effect on work outcomes. Minimal cases of work-family conflict were reported.

This process is worth exploring, so as to weigh the benefits to both the Library and employees. The concept is relevant to the integrated internal communication of the Library and will be explored further in the Library environment, because it involves the management of information and interaction with an employee who is home-based.

This study does not only focus on general trends from the field of organisational communication, but also considers context-related trends, such as the transformation and employment equity that applies in South Africa as they inform the challenges experienced by the Unisa. This will assist in understanding the complexities of organisational life and the communication system of the Unisa Library (Koschmann 2012).

### **3.7 Trends in South Africa**

Literature from the South African context, particularly the Unisa Library, provides new insight into issues that have been addressed to a limited extent in previous studies, such as the transformation agenda that is incorporated in the Unisa 2015 Strategic Plan, Employment Equity and Affirmative Action, Black Economic Empowerment and the multicultural environment, as recommended by Meintjes and Steyn (2006). The trends in South Africa that are explored as potential sub-constructs of the organisational culture construct include: transformation, employment equity, black economic empowerment and the multicultural environment.

#### **3.7.1 Transformation**

The concept of transformation has been applied and experienced in South Africa as part of the transition to a democratic era. In promoting the transformation agenda and ensuring its implementation, Chapter 10 of the *White Paper on Transformation of the Public Service, 1995* provides for the need to introduce laws outlawing discrimination. This has resulted in the

introduction of employment equity, affirmative action and black economic empowerment policies (Republic of South Africa 1995).

The government regards transformation as a dynamic, focused and relatively short-term process designed to reshape the process of administrative reform to introduce change. The focus of transformation has been on the eradication of all discriminatory practices in all structures and institutions in addressing challenges such as inequality in occupations and the maintenance of reasonable labour practices, irrespective of race, gender, disability or class and to create a genuine representative workforce (Sinden 2017; Republic of South Africa 1995).

According to Sinden (2017), transformation should be about making real changes. Strategies to achieve this vision include the development of new organisational cultures; human resources development; managing change and diversity to create a rainbow workplace; and representativeness and affirmative action that takes the form of race and gender transformation. As a result, the Centre for Higher Education Transformation (CHET) was established with the main role of evaluating the transformation process in higher education by bringing together people from diverse backgrounds in promoting the South African democratic dispensation (Jones 2017; Reddy 2004).

In its Strategic Plan 2010–2015, the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) singled out transformation as its top priority and vowed to intensify the transformation of universities at all levels, including the promotion of a culture of professionalism and personal accountability (Reddy 2004).

In compliance with the vision of the Department, Unisa placed transformation at the centre of organisational plans and the Unisa Transformation Agenda was conceptualised as part of the 2015 Strategic Plan. As a result, the Unisa Library developed an Employment Equity Policy and an Anti-Racism and Racial Harassment Policy, as well as a gender equality framework. A branch of the Unisa Library, called the Thabo Mbeki Presidential Library, was also established

in September 2014, based on the concept of African Renaissance (Andersson 2010).

The steps taken by the Unisa in centralising and incorporating the transformation agenda into the Unisa 2015 Strategic Plan address what Gray and Laidlaw (2004) refer to as “the need to adapt to the changing cultural and political environments”. The change in the South African political system has not crippled the university and its components, but has rather motivated it to embrace change. Such changes provide this study with the reason to refine the communication audit instruments to prevent what Zwijze-Koning and De Jong (2007) refer to as a misdiagnosis of organisational communication.

The concept of transformation was included in this study as a sub-construct of the organisational culture construct, as it provides the study with insight into changes in government action that affect the communication system of the Library, resulting in the need to adapt the constructs that inform the measuring tool for integrated internal communication.

### **3.7.2 *Employment equity***

In accordance with the South African Constitution Act, No. 108 of 1996, the Department of Labour introduced the Employment Equity Act, No. 55 of 1998. The Act was promulgated to address employment equity in South Africa, particularly the disparities that disadvantage certain groups of people from designated groups. The Act also seeks to promote diversity; provide reasonable accommodation to people from designated groups, including people with disabilities; and also address issues of gender equality that focus on the elimination of discriminatory practices that place women at the lower levels of organisational hierarchies and promote the creation of a society in which men and women are equal. In South Africa, equality is regarded as a right and not a privilege, as confirmed in Section 9(3) of the Constitution (Republic of South Africa 1996: Section 9.3; Sinden 2017; Parmegiani 2017).

According to Parmegiani (2017), South Africa remains highly inequitable in terms of employment practices – despite having one of the most progressive Constitutions that addresses issues of gender equality. There is still a need for effective implementation of the existing legislative framework to address the gap between policy and practice.

The Employment Equity Act also provides this study with a platform to address the communication needs of employees with disabilities. Section 4 of the Act indicates that the Act applies to all employees and employers and the Unisa Library is not exempted from abiding by the provisions of this Act (Republic of South Africa 1998: Section 4). In compliance with the Act, Unisa adopted Strategic Goal 6.7, which focuses on the reduction of inequalities to address the highly skewed profile of management.

The Unisa Library operationalises the national legislation by developing the 2015–2018 Talent Management and Employment Equity framework to regulate the library environment (Unisa 2015b). Employment equity will be considered a sub-construct of the organisational culture construct that addresses inequality to ensure a representative workforce and the communication needs of people with disabilities in the Library.

### **3.7.3 *Black economic empowerment***

Through its growth strategy, the South African Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) created the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) unit. The BBBEE Act, No. 53 of 2003 was promulgated on 9 January 2004, in order to establish a framework for the promotion of black economic empowerment that enables meaningful participation of black people, women and rural or under-developed communities in the mainstream economy (Republic of South Africa 2003; Krüger 2011:208).

The DTI defines *B-BBEE* as “a specific government policy to advance economic transformation and enhance the economic participation of black people in the

South African economy” (Krüger 2011: 209). The Act addresses inequalities and injustices of the past, as highlighted in the transformation agenda by giving certain previously disadvantaged groups (blacks, coloured, Indians and Chinese) privileges that were previously (pre-1994) not available to them, such as: participation of blacks in the economy and promoting a higher growth rate; increased employment; more equitable income distribution; the promotion of equal opportunity; and equal access to government services (Republic of South Africa 2003).

The BEE-scorecard was introduced to address the compliance measures for BBBEE to measure, among others, the extent to which companies comply with the Act in terms of management, employment equity, affirmative action and skills development (Republic of South Africa 2003).

In contrast to the objectives of the BEE, Mbeki (2009) argues that BEE has proven to be a fatal blow against the emergence of black entrepreneurship by creating a small class of unproductive but wealthy black crony capitalists of whom the majority are the black political elites. Krüger (2011) criticises BBBEE as a wealth distribution programme that discriminates against people who do not benefit from the program. He recommends the Act be scrapped and replaced with an economic expansion strategy. Mbeki (2009) further criticises affirmative action and BEE as the core black ideology that drives the enrichment agenda. The Government of National Unity should, therefore, reconsider its transformation agenda.

BBBEE affects communication in South African organisations, including the Unisa Library, because organisations need to communicate BBBEE requirements to employees to ensure compliance. Management should adapt organisational communication and activities to accommodate the requirements imposed by the unique political environment such as employment equity, affirmative action and skills development. The transformation agenda is not yet over, as the Unisa Library has confirmed its application in its strategic plan, making it necessary to comply with the BBBEE Act.

The concept of black economic empowerment will be explored in this study as a potential sub-construct of the organisational culture construct for measuring integrated internal communication in the Unisa Library.

#### **3.7.4 *Multicultural environment***

The Unisa Library employs a diverse workforce, representative of the broader community to fulfil its commitment in providing information services and resources to students, researchers and academic, professional and administrative staff, regardless of their location (Unisa. Department of Library Services 2015). This positive initiative needs to be maintained in one way or another, as a diverse workforce constitutes people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, speaking different languages. That, in itself, declares the Unisa environment as multicultural. Diversity management becomes a necessity – not an option – to ensure harmony and understanding between employees.

According to Mao and Hale (2015), employees from diverse cultural backgrounds may exhibit different communication styles that affect the communication system of an organisation. Gut, Wilczewski and Gorbaniuk (2017) believe that the solution to obstacles introduced by cultural diversity should come from employees. – Employees should acknowledge and embrace their differences; have a better understanding of one another's behaviour; understand culturally relevant patterns of conducting themselves; and adapt and display a positive attitude to intercultural interactions. Employees are expected to conform to the ethical conduct guidelines of the organisation for better communication with superiors and co-workers during and after work hours.

Mena and Rogers (2017) assert that organisations have to recognise diversity, as that creates a climate that facilitates effective communication. Organisations that are sensitive to the different cultures of individual employees find it easy to



address the multicultural issues affecting the communication system of an organisation.

Lo, Waters and Christensen (2017) further argue that cultural differences are not the only factor affecting organisational communication. – New perspectives such as technological advances are blamed for changing the organisational landscape, which further complicates organisational communication; particularly in terms of the introduction of the social media context.

The multicultural environment will be explored in this study, as it focusses on cultural differences and the diversity of employees in the Unisa Library. Diversity and cultural differences are identified as sub-constructs of the organisational culture construct.

Based on the foregoing discussion, it can be concluded that trends emerging from the South African context emphasise change, equality, diversity, the recognition of the multicultural backgrounds of employees, black economic empowerment and representativeness as important elements in a democracy; hence the need for transformation and strategies for implementation. The concepts of culture and diversity are intertwined in addressing cultural diversity. Equality should precede representivity, as a representative workforce displays equal proportions in terms of race, gender and disability in compliance with affirmative action targets. The concept of representivity cannot be discussed without addressing equality; i.e. an equal society is a representative society.

Emerging trends from the South African context apply the excellence theory, which promotes issues of culture, gender, diversity and the communication behaviour of both individuals and the organisation. This will assist in addressing changes that will be introduced by democracy into the Library, such as the promulgation of Acts that promote equality. Literature shows that the principles of democracy can be applied in different cultures and political systems to address issues of cultural diversity in the workplace (Jensen, Papastefanou & Conradie 2013; Grunig 2013).

### **3.8 Conclusion**

This chapter explored the internal communication audits from both the international and the South African perspectives, with the intention of identifying the most adequate measuring tool for integrated internal communication in the Unisa Library. Lessons learned from previous researchers provide insight into the path to be taken in the development of a measuring tool for this study.

Four measuring instruments – the CSQ, the ICA audit, the OCS and the CIT – were identified as the most relevant and the following constructs that address those instruments were adapted and integrated for the purpose of this study: informational, relational, informational/relational, communication channels, organisational outcomes, organisational culture and the communication experiences. The strength and weaknesses of the instruments were also considered to ensure their relevance in this study.

As communication is not static, this chapter also explored the emerging international and South African trends that may contribute to the measurement of integrated internal communication. The following new sub-constructs were considered for incorporation into the organisational culture construct for the purpose of this study: transformation or change, changes in government action, customised services, telecommuting, employment equity and the diversity of employees to address generational differences, differences in gender and ethnicity, cultural differences and the communication needs of people with disabilities.

Globalisation facilitates the political, economic, social and cultural changes across national borders, while ICT innovations are regarded the drivers of globalisation. In addition to driving globalisation, ICT has been identified as a sub-construct of the communication channels construct that mediates the integrated internal communication of the organisation.

The next chapter integrates different view points on internal communication audits and proposes a theoretical framework for the development of the new measuring tool.

## **CHAPTER 4: THE PROPOSED THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR AN INTEGRATED INTERNAL COMMUNICATION AUDIT (IICA)**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Chapter 3 discussed the theoretical approaches of existing perspectives on internal communication audits by reviewing the literature. The emerging trends and the trends in South Africa were identified as sub-constructs of the organisational culture construct that may contribute to the measurement of the integrated internal communication (IIC) of the Library.

This chapter integrates the different viewpoints on the existing internal communication audits into a new proposed theoretical framework that will form the basis for the development of an adapted IICA tool. The IICA will address the realities experienced in the Unisa Library, such as the multicultural environment, the transformation agenda, employment equity and affirmative action. This chapter is structured as follows: constructs for measuring IIC and the proposed IICA theoretical framework.

### **4.2 Constructs for measuring integrated internal communication**

The constructs for measuring IIC in this study address Research Question (RQ2): What constructs contribute to the measurement of integrated internal communication based on existing perspectives?

As defined in Chapter 1, this study identifies a construct as an element of a measuring tool. Literature indicates that researchers use the following concepts interchangeably: dimensions, factors and constructs. This study adopts the concept of a construct. Constructs for measuring the IIC of the Library will be identified, defined and tested to ensure their validity and reliability (Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2015).

Background on communication constructs indicates that Dale Level (1959) identified the following dimensions: information workers received from management; notification about changes in policies, procedures and working conditions; explanations of company policies; information on company expectations; communication style of supervisors; perceived freedom to discuss matters with supervisors; the perception of being properly informed about vacation policy, salary increases, insurance, personal accounts and absences; methods by means of which information is obtained; and the preferred methods of acquiring information (Hecht 1978). Dale's approach focused on the communication activities directed at organisational needs without recognition of employee needs and voice. The focus was on receiving information that enables the execution of organisational activities without giving employees a platform to participate in decision-making.

In 1968, Gieselman presented a shift in communication audits to assess the communication strengths and weaknesses making use of the "communication survey" that focused on questions addressing the following areas: the amount of information needed; the type of information needed for optimal performance; sources of information; supervisory communication; communication climate; quality and quantity of written communication; and the quality and quantity of oral communication (Gieselman 1968:19).

The areas measured by Gieselman (1968) correlate well with the dimensions developed by the ICA audit in 1977, which were adapted by Downs and Adrian in 2004, as discussed in Chapter 3 (Downs & Adrian 2004).

Historical background information on the development of the communication constructs provides guidance in terms of the constructs that should be adapted to the IICA tool. The constructs considered in this study are informed by the research problem, which identifies existing communication audit instruments as limited in addressing new developments and current trends in organisations. Furthermore, they had to be adapted in addressing the environmental conditions of the Unisa Library. The two communication audit instruments

identified include the CSQ and the ICA audit. The two instruments were complemented with the OCS and the CIT, as informed by the literature (Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2007; Zijze-Koning & De Jong 2015).

The proposed IICA tool adapted and operationally defined the following constructs that were identified in Chapter 3: the informational construct, the relational construct, the informational/relational construct, the communication channels, organisational outcomes and organisational culture.

#### **4.2.1 The informational construct**

The informational construct consists of a merger of dimensions from the CSQ and the ICA. In terms of the CSQ, this construct addresses the quality of communication channels used to communicate with employees; the information received by individuals about the organisation; their immediate job environment; and information about the overall functioning of the organisation, which includes new government policies which impacts the organisation (Downs & Hazen 1977; Meintjes & Steyn 2006; Abdullah & Hui 2014).

The dimensions adapted from the ICA audit include: information received; information sent; sources of information; the amount of information; and action on communication sent or feedback (Downs & Adrian 2004).

The information that employees receive about the organisation often includes employee news; current trends in the organisation; organisational performance, such as organisational goals and objectives; and job-related items, such as policies and benefits. This information is transmitted through different communication channels, such as face-to-face, written reports, the intranet, email, blog and internal social networking sites or social media, such as Twitter and Facebook. The media richness theory regards face-to-face communication as the richest medium, while email has been regarded as fast in transmitting information (Hasel 2011; Abdullah & Hui 2014; Nikolic *et al* 2013; Horn 2014).

The information is transmitted from the following sources of information through channels that differ in terms of richness: senior management, immediate supervisor, individuals in other units, co-workers in my unit, group meetings with my team, minutes of meetings, the grapevine, subordinates and social media, e.g. Whatsapp, SMS and Facebook (Downs & Adrian 2004).

The informational construct applies the information and media richness theories. Issues addressed by the two theories include the quality of communication channels that fit the task at hand; the information received and sent; and the feedback loop in the communication process. In this study, this construct will measure the information received; information sent through different channels; and the sources of information.

#### **4.2.2 Relational construct**

The relational construct consists of a merger of two dimensions of the CSQ: relationship with subordinates and horizontal communication, and the organisational communication relationship item of the ICA audit (Meintjes & Steyn 2006; Downs & Adrian 2004).

The relational construct focuses on relationships between supervisors and subordinates, which is facilitated by means of the directional flow of information. Information flows downwards to subordinates and upwards from employees at lower levels. The communication that flows downwards from supervisors to subordinates is considered a task for management, since managers are expected to know what to communicate, when to communicate and what type of communication to use (Hasel 2011; Stredwick 2014; Abdullah & Hui 2014).

Research has proved that employees, who are provided with sufficient information and are involved in their work, are likely to commit to a long-term relationship and defend their organisation. They are also less likely to spread malicious content and rumours, as compared to disgruntled employees, who represent a threat to the organisation. Downward communication seeks to

transmit information about job descriptions, policies and procedures, benefits, performance reports, information on any changes such as the structural arrangements, rules and regulations (Stredwick 2014; Men 2014; Fill 2013).

In terms of upwards communication, employees have the responsibility to raise their expectations with their managers in addressing job expectations, job requirements and any other issues that are important in their jobs. They must also explore what is offered by the organisation in terms of organisational culture, as that builds loyalty towards the organisation (Hasel 2011; Stredwick 2014).

The relational construct also includes horizontal or informal communication that consists of the exchange of information between co-workers or two individuals at the same level. Patterns of communication include intradepartmental problem solving, where members are concerned about task accomplishment; facilitating requests; making suggestions; addressing mutual problems; and the coordination of information. Interdepartmental coordination occurs when members from different departments use horizontal communication to facilitate the accomplishment of joint tasks or projects. Sources of horizontal communication include grapevine, rumours and gossip (Hasel 2011; Canary 2011; Robbins *et al* 2009). Informal communication will be explored in this study to establish the weaknesses and strengths in the communication system of the Library.

Steele and Plenty (2014) recognise the relational construct and assert that employee satisfaction with internal communication involves a relational dimension that is rooted in a dyadic relationship between subordinate and supervisor.

The relational construct applies the excellence theory by promoting vertical and horizontal communication that cultivate long-term relationships between supervisors and subordinates. Literature indicates that vertical communication occurs through upwards and downwards flow of communication, while



horizontal communication occurs through sources such as grapevine, rumours and gossip. In this study, employees will be asked to indicate the importance of different kinds of information that they receive and desire in the communication system of the Library.

#### **4.2.3 Informational/relational construct**

The informational/relational construct consist of a merger of the three dimensions of the CSQ: personal feedback, communication climate and relationship with supervisor (Meintjes & Steyn 2006).

This construct consists of: personal feedback; an open communication structure that promotes employee participation; and the promotion of a relationship with the supervisor (Woldearegay 2013; Nikolic *et al* 2013). The constructs are discussed in the following sections.

##### **4.2.3.1 Personal feedback**

*Personal feedback* refers to performance appraisal that is regulated by the performance management system of an organisation, so as to maintain control on the performance of individual employees, with the intention to measure their productivity and efficiency. Appraisal interviews provide feedback to subordinates and identify the training needs of employees (Ishii 2005; Stredwick 2014). In addition to the performance management system, supervisors also provide subordinates with personal feedback in the form of information about the organisation, job expectations, their overall performance, as well as any alert on their mistakes. Feedback has been identified as a process of maintaining control in organisations. Negative feedback is usually corrective, while positive feedback promotes growth and assists in times of change and transformation (Woldearegay 2013; Tsai, Chuang & Hsieh 2009; Nikolic *et al* 2013; Miller 2006).

Communication that flows upwards from subordinates to the superiors provides managers with feedback on daily operational issues; current issues and problems that require decisions; feedback on the effectiveness of downward communication; a platform for information sharing between superiors and lower level members; and enhancing cohesion by encouraging employee participation and involvement (Hasel 2011, Canary 2011; Ivancevich, Konopaske & Matteson 2011). This construct will measure the feedback or action taken on the communication that employees have sent to different internal stakeholders in the Library, including members of management.

The need to measure this construct is further influenced by the Unisa Strategic Plan (Unisa 2015b:24), which focuses on ensuring quality through performance management system that is clearly communicated to organisational units to ensure that staff members are regularly appraised. The appraisal system provides feedback to managers on the ideas, opinions and the overall performance of employees.

#### **4.2.3.2 Communication structure**

In an open communication structure, the focus is on interactions and relationships that influence the perception of employees about organisational life and motivates them to feel satisfied with aspects of the communication that surrounds them. It reflects an individual employee's evaluation of the informational and relational interchange of an organisation, which includes organisational activities, policies, philosophies and styles. When receiving information about the organisation and their job expectations, employees build a trust relationship with management and are encouraged to identify with the organisation. Questionnaires addressing the communication structure ask questions about interpersonal trust, accessibility to information and the amount of time spent communicating with people at different levels within the organisation (Cheney *et al* 2011; Woldearegay 2013).

#### **4.2.3.3 Promotion of relationship with supervisor**

The relationship with a supervisor refers to communication with the immediate supervisor, which is a two-way symmetrical communication characterised by openness to communication and the supervisors listening to employees. This relationship reflects on the overall organisational position and impacts on the communication structure of an organisation, in that supervisors are expected to set the tone and lead the communication process. Therefore, supervisors should present themselves as good agents of the organisation in their communication with employees (Ishii 2005; Abdullah & Hui 2014).

Communication with the supervisor builds a trust relationship, making employees to believe in supervisors for giving them regular information about organisational goals, objectives, achievements, future plans and organisational perspectives. Supervisors must, therefore, engage employees in the development of organisational strategy, because engaged employees are likely to be dedicated to the achievement of organisational success. Engagement is seen as a key that unlocks production and transformation in the workplace (Macleod & Clarke 2009; Nikolic *et al* 2013; Stredwick 2014).

Employee perceptions of the extent to which they are provided with information by their managers and the degree to which they are provided with the chance to respond to and comment on issues are associated with their levels of job satisfaction, organisational commitment and performance (Milward, Bryson & Forth 2000). Questionnaires addressing this construct focus on issues of relationship with supervisor; interpersonal trust; accessibility to information; and the amount of time spent communicating with people at different levels in the organisation (Cheney *et al* 2011).

The informational/relational construct applies the excellence theory because of its focus on personal feedback, the promotion of trust relationships with the supervisor and the openness of the communication structure that promotes the two-way symmetrical communication.

#### **4.2.4 Communication channels**

The concept of communication channels was identified by the ICA audit as a construct. The construct was adapted in this study to diagnose the strengths and weaknesses of the communication system of the Library as communication channels at the disposal of employees are used for the exchange of information (Downs & Adrian 2004). This construct addresses Research Question 1 (RQ1): What methods for measuring integrated internal communication exist in the literature?.

This construct consists of the communication channels – either formal or informal – that are used to facilitate the two-way symmetrical communication in an organisation. Communication channels consist of face-to-face conversations, e-mails, the social media channels such as Twitter, Facebook, grapevine, reports, memos, manuals, speeches and instructions that assist employees in their work performance. Downward communication is regarded as the most common source of formal communication in organisations. Formal channels are prescribed by the organisation (Johansson 2007; Hargie & Tourish 2009; Hasel 2011; Lunenburg 2010a; Cheney *et al* 2011; Horn 2014; Cowan 2017).

Horizontal or informal communication takes place between co-workers in an organisation to fill the information gap. The construct ask questions that address the amount of information received through the informal channels, such as the grapevine. The informal channels are not prescribed by the organisation, but are readily available for communication purposes (Hasel 2011).

This construct measures the amount of information received through different channels, either formal or informal, including the social media. Apart from the channels identified through literature, the findings of the qualitative interviews will further inform the channels that should be measured in this study.

ICT is not regarded as a construct in this study, but as a mediator that facilitates the flow of information through different channels in the communication process of an organisation.

This construct applies the media richness theory, which posits that different communication mediums facilitate the flow of information in an organisation. The communication mediums are categorised in terms of their richness; hence the need to measure the amount of information transmitted by different channels to establish the effectiveness of the communication channels.

#### **4.2.5 *Organisational outcomes***

The ICA audit recognises organisational outcomes as a communication audit construct. The focus is on the personal achievements of individual employees and the organisational achievements (Downs & Adrian 2004).

In terms of organisational achievements, employees should be informed of the performance of the organisation – both failures or achievements – in an honest and transparent manner. This will build a sense of ownership and will motivate employees to do their best to ensure the effectiveness of the organisation. Employees should be involved in the decision-making process; particularly when conducting the analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis) of an organisation (Jooste 2010).

This construct applies the excellence theory, which promotes organisational effectiveness. The focus is on effective communication of both employee and organisational achievements.

#### **4.2.6 *Organisational culture***

Organisational culture is identified as a new construct in this study. The measurement perspectives on organisational culture have evolved over time, resulting in the use of survey instruments that measure observable and

measurable manifestations of culture such as values and behavioural norms (Ashkanasy, Broadfoot & Falkus 2000:132; Martin, Frost & O'Neill 2006; Denison, Nieminen & Kotrba 2014).

The literature indicates that the construct of organisational culture is often used interchangeably with the construct of organisational climate, as identified in the Downs-Hazen CSQ (Denison, Nieminen & Kotrba 2014). The difference between the two constructs lies in the methodology used – i.e. culture has been considered a qualitative tradition, as opposed to the climate, which falls within the quantitative tradition (Ostroff, Kinicki & Tamkins 2003).

According to Cheney *et al* (2011:95), communication climate focuses on the individual's perception about life in an organisation, while Robbins *et al* (2009:424) believe that organisational culture measures factors such as employees' perception of the organisation; the extent to which the organisation encourages teamwork and reward innovation; the degree of risk tolerance; and support for employees. Organisational culture often reflects the national culture.

Keyton (2014) argues that the organisational culture constructs could not exist without the communication between organisational members. The role of communication is acknowledged in the study of organisational culture by identifying the following common dimensions that overlap across instruments measuring communication and organisational culture: communication climate, relationships and trust. In this study, an overlap in dimensions necessitates the need to integrate the elements of the organisational culture survey into the proposed measuring tool, with the intention of addressing the political and the multicultural perspectives of integrated internal communication.

The construct of organisational culture is relevant in this study, because the Unisa Library is characterised by diversity in the workforce and operates in an ever changing environment that is influenced by the changing political, cultural conditions and the advancements in information communication technologies. The transformation agenda in South Africa that is adopted by Unisa as part of

the 2015 Strategic Plan further promotes the need to address changes in the Library.

In this study, the construct of organisational culture addresses the following sub-constructs that are informed by literature: the political perspective, the multicultural perspective and the societal influence.

#### **4.2.6.1 The political perspective**

The political perspective consists of the political environment within which the organisation exists. This manifests itself through the actions of governmental centres of power (Reid 2017). The political environment will be explored in the Unisa Library through interviews, which will include the influence of the South African national legislation on the communication system of the Library. The concept of transformation as adopted at the Library was supported by Denison, Nieminen and Kotrba (2014), who indicate that the organisation should create adaptive ways to meet changing needs by reacting quickly to current trends and anticipating future changes.

Questions measuring the political perspective include the communication of changes that affects the organisation. Changes in government action or legislation that affect the Library had been explored.

#### **4.2.6.2 The multicultural perspective**

The multicultural environment addresses issues of core values of the organisation that should be shared by all members to create a sense of identity, morale, involvement and teamwork. A multicultural environment should promote diversity by ensuring that there is consistency in terms of shared values and efficient systems and processes (Denison, Nieminen & Kotrba 2014).

Denison, Nieminen and Kotrba (2014) identify involvement as an important element of the organisational culture construct that focuses on the engagement

of individuals in activities of the organisation. Employees have to be empowered to manage their work and initiate new ideas. Teamwork orientation must be promoted for the achievement of common goals, as organisations rely on team effort for the achievement of organisational goals.

#### **4.2.6.3 Societal influence**

Societal influence addresses issues of morale and involvement. Employee morale is shaped by values. Lack of involvement in decision-making processes and lack of communication from senior management impact negatively on employees, which, in turn affects their morale. Employee morale can be improved by recognising and appreciating the contribution made by employees in the organisation; involving employees in decision-making processes; promoting positive communication; building loyalty; and providing training to employees (Ravichandran & Mishra 2018; Barker 2017; Venzin 2017). Employees influence the status core of the organisation; particularly in times of organisational change.

The questions measuring this construct should also include the level of compliance with the Library values; involvement of employees in the activities of the Library; the moral conduct of employees; the customisation of services to the needs of clients; and the adaptation to new technologies.

This construct applies the excellence theory by considering diversity and a representative workforce; promoting honesty between employees; promoting teamwork; encouraging innovation; promoting the treatment of people in a consistent manner; promoting compliance with the Library values; and promoting Ubuntu, which is recognised as a best practice.

This construct also applies the information theory by encouraging participation of employees in meetings and decision-making; promoting the communication of the Library values to employees; and informing employees of changes in legislation, such as the Employment Equity Act and the Protection of Private



Information (PoPI) Act that affect them in the provision of information sources to clients.

#### **4.2.7 *Communication experiences***

The communication experiences construct focuses on the identification of positive or negative communicative experiences encountered by employees in the organisation. Participants are usually asked to recall details of communication incidents that best present the communication that they experience in the organisation (Carvalho 2013). Questions addressing this construct will ask participants to identify any positive or negative communication experiences and the source of the experience.

This construct applies the excellence theory, in that it asks questions that seek to obtain personal experiences – negative experiences in particular – that employees find difficult to reveal. Such information usually informs organisations about the problems experienced by employees in the communication system.

The identified constructs, as discussed in Chapter 3, were explored by researchers in different organisations and form part of the broader theoretical framework as proposed in the next section.

### **4.3 *Proposed IICA Theoretical Framework***

This study proposes the theoretical framework that provides the platform for the development of the IICA tool.

#### **4.3.1 *The purpose of the IICA***

The proposed IICA will be used as a tool for evaluating the IIC of the Unisa Library to address the limitations experienced with the existing communication audit instruments. The concept of IICA is derived from the need to audit the IIC,

focusing on the constructs that best describe the environmental conditions at the Library. The purpose of the IICA is to identify the main strengths and weaknesses of the communication system by diagnosing the communication problems to assist the management by identifying areas of improvement in the communication system (Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2015; Hogard & Ellis 2006; Hogard, Ellis, Ellis & Barker 2005).

The IICA addresses what Antonis (2005) referred to as the communication issues that the traditional and most widely used communication audits, such as the ICA audit and the CSQ, do not measure, due to the lack of recognition of the integrative nature of internal communication. This is supported by Ruck (2015), who indicates that limited research has been conducted on integrated internal communication focusing on the interaction between organisational members. The current trends and organisational culture introduced in this study are some of the constructs that the existing communication audits have not recognised.

#### **4.3.2 *Theoretical framework for the IICA***

The proposed theoretical framework is broadly based on Grunig's (2013) two-way symmetrical model of communication, which encourages the evaluation of communication, focusing on internal stakeholders' (employees and management) understanding and perceptions of the organisation (Du Plessis 2006).

The constructs that inform the proposed IICA instrument cut across geographical regions, as dictated by globalisation and influenced by the challenges that South Africa is facing, which include the recognition of diverse cultures, equality and the representativeness of the workforce (Kalla 2006). This study integrates the traditional constructs with the newly identified constructs that are dictated by the South African environmental conditions. The proposed constructs address various aspects of communication in the Unisa Library,

which include challenges introduced by transformation, diversity in culture and gender equality.

The identified challenges posed by the South African environmental conditions also affect the strategic management of the internal communication process, resulting in the integration of all formal and informal communication transactions between internal stakeholders at the Library (Kalla 2005; Welch & Jackson 2007).

The integration process resulted in the development of the new IICA tool that will be used to conduct the communication audit in the Unisa Library. The proposed audit tool consists of a total of 24 questions addressing the seven constructs consisting of the six existing constructs and one new construct. The following constructs were identified: informational, relational, informational/relational, communication channels, organisational outcomes, organisational culture and communication experience.

The organisational culture construct addresses new constructs, including constructs addressing the societal influence such as teamwork, morale and involvement. The new constructs are categorised into two environments that prevail in the Library: the political environment, which consists of transformation, changes in government action, customised services and employment equity, and the multicultural environment that consists of diversity and cultural congruence.

According to Downs and Adrian (2012), an effective IICA tool should provide benefits that generate new data; unique feedback loop; enhance employee training; facilitates strategic planning; promote a realistic appraisal system for employees; promote benchmarking that encourages comparisons; and employee participation in strategic decisions.

Based on the preceding theoretical chapters, the proposed IICA theoretical framework for this study is presented in Figure 4.1.

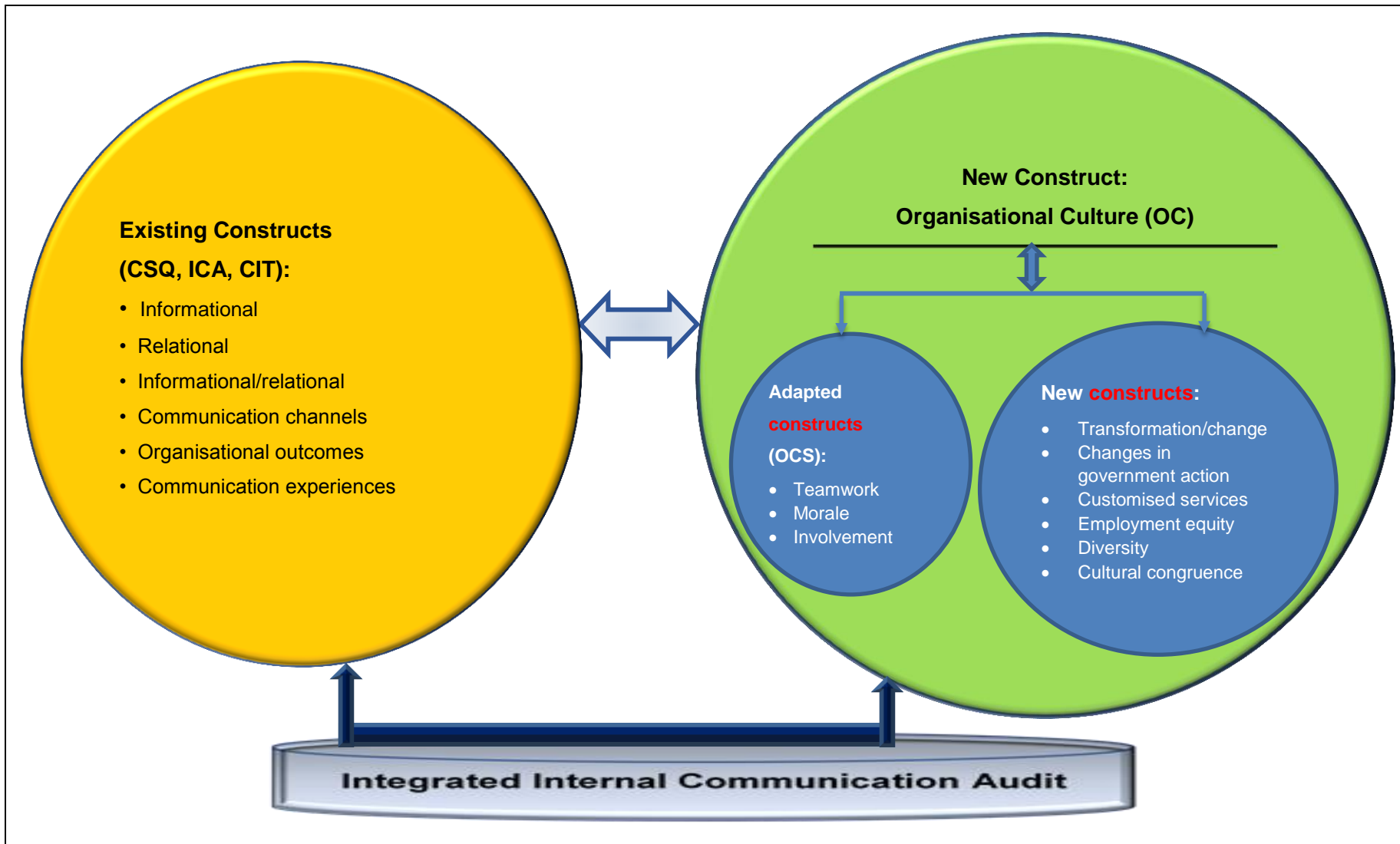


Figure 4.1: The proposed IICA theoretical framework (Source: Developed by the author)

Emanating from the proposed IICA theoretical framework, the relevant constructs are presented in Table 4.1:

**Table 4.1: An outline of the constructs that contribute to the IICA**

Instruments	Constructs
CSQ	Informational Relational Informational/relational
ICA	Communication channels Organisational outcomes
CIT	Communication experiences
OC (New)	Organisational culture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teamwork</li> <li>• Morale (Personality traits towards organisational values, ethical conduct)</li> <li>• Involvement</li> <li>• Changing Environments (New) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Political environment (Transformation/change, changes in government action, customised service &amp; employment equity)</li> <li>- Multicultural environment (Diversity, cultural congruence)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

(Source: Developed by the author)

#### 4.4 Conclusion

This chapter integrated the existing and newly proposed constructs in an attempt to develop the IICA tool for the Unisa Library.

The integration process introduces the integrated approach to internal communication audits and recognises the constructs developed in the seventies as well as the new constructs dictated by the South African environmental conditions, as dictated by the democratic dispensation. The process results in

the development of the proposed IICA theoretical framework, which consists of the following seven (7) constructs: informational, relational, informational/relational, communication channels, organisational outcomes, organisational culture and communication experiences.

The proposed framework informs the IICA tool that evaluates communication at the Unisal Library, with the purpose of identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the communication process and identifying the areas of improvement.

The next chapter will focus on the research methodology.

## **CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **5.1 Introduction**

Chapter 4 focused on the development of the new internal communication audit tool called the integrated internal communication audit (IICA), which was developed to assess or evaluate all formal and informal communication taking place internally at all levels of the Unisa Library.

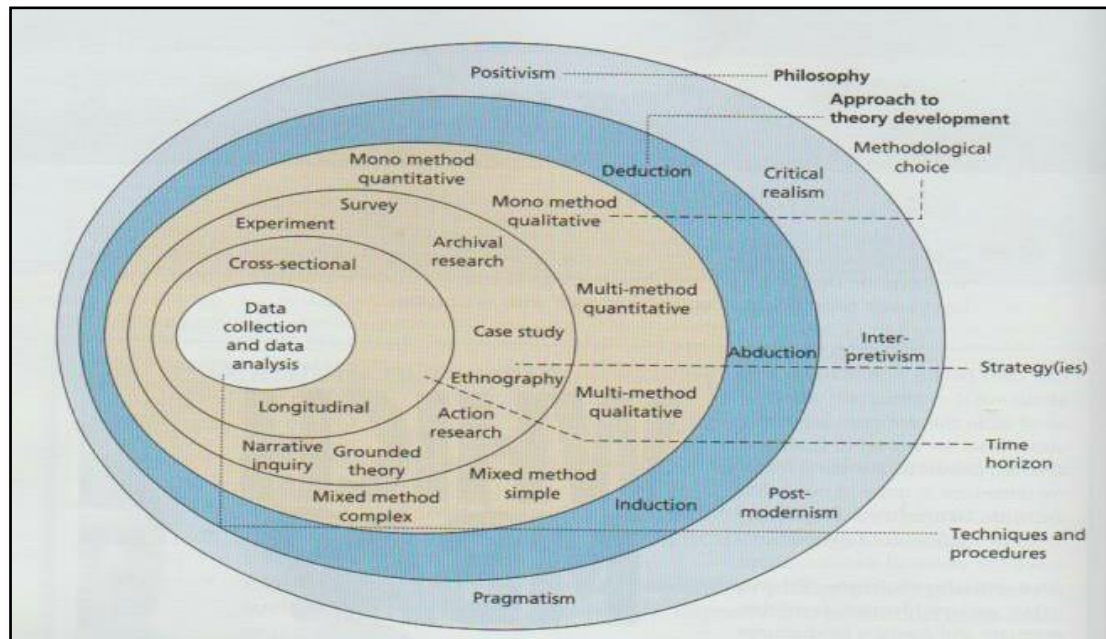
This chapter focuses on the research methodology. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2015), research methodology is the general approach a researcher takes in conducting a research project. It is a technique or procedure for investigating the attitudes and beliefs of individuals on a specific topic of interest by describing in detail how the study will be conducted (Tavakoli 2012; Roberts 2010). The research methodology is dependent on the research design in identifying the methods of data collection and analysis. The research methodology is different from other methods, because specific procedures and techniques are followed when collecting and analysing data (Creswell 2015). Research design and methodology consist of research methods and techniques that assist the researcher in preventing errors and gaining confidence in the findings of the research (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell 2005; Ruane 2005).

This chapter is structured as follows: research process, research philosophy, research approaches, methodological choices, research strategy, the population and sample, data collection methods, measurement instruments, reliability and validity, data analysis, ethical considerations and the conclusion.

### **5.2 Research process**

The research methodology and the research process to be followed in this study were carefully chosen to ensure that they support the outcome and the

significance of the results. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016) illustrate the research process by using an onion diagram, which was adopted in this study, in order to determine if the appropriate research design has been followed. The research onion process shown in Figure 5.1 was used to outline the research process for this study.



**Figure 5.1: Research Onion diagram (Adapted from Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2016:124)**

The research onion served as a route map to chart the way through this chapter. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016), the onion is a metaphor for describing the layers of the research process. The outer layers of the research process contain thoughts about the research philosophies and approach. The central layers reflect the need to consider research strategies and choices, while the centre of the onion indicates that “data collection and analysis are of central concern” (Saunders & Lewis 2012:103).

The research methodology is informed by the existing literature and the new measurement tool designed to measure the integrated internal communication (IIC) at the Unisa Library, as proposed in Chapter 4. Errors and duplications



were also prevented. The following steps of the research methodology were identified: the kind of research, the population, sampling, measurement instruments, data collection procedures, and data analysis and interpretation. These steps provided direction in addressing the research problem (Creswell 2014).

### **5.3 Research philosophy**

As part of the research methodology, the philosophies of ontology (nature of reality) and epistemology (nature of knowledge) were applied in addressing the research problem (Howes 2015). According to Creswell and Poth (2017), ontology relates to the nature of reality and its characteristics as experienced in the world, whereas epistemology relates to knowledge, or what constitutes knowledge and the subjective processes through which knowledge is created from the experiences of people. Research philosophy refers to a system of beliefs and assumptions (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2016). The authors further indicate the following five philosophical stances: positivism, critical realism, interpretivism, post-modernism and pragmatism. The philosophical stance adopted for this study was interpretivism and positivism.

Saunders and Lewis (2012) describe interpretivism as a research philosophy that advocates the necessity to understand the differences between humans in their roles as social actors. It is a process in which the researcher is concerned with gathering rich insights into subjective meanings rather than providing law-like generalisations. It focuses on conducting research among people rather than upon objects.

The interpretivism philosophical stance is qualitative in nature. In this study semi-structured interviews were conducted with a small sample consisting of members of management in the Unisa Library. Interpretivism was used as a way to gain knowledge on the development of the measurement tool for IIC within the Library and it focused on narratives, stories, perceptions and

interpretations. In terms of ontology, those were socially constructed through culture and language.

According to Bryman and Bell (2015), positivism is an epistemological position that advocates the application of the methods of the natural sciences in the study of social reality and beyond. Creswell (2014) indicates that postpositivists reflect a deterministic philosophy about research in which causes probably determine effects and outcomes. Therefore, the problems studied by postpositivists reflect issues that need to identify and assess the causes that influence the outcomes, such as the ones found in experiments. The measurement tool developed as informed by literature and the findings of the qualitative interviews were used to test its reliability in measuring the IIC of the Unisa Library through the proposed IICA tool.

#### **5.4 Research approaches**

This study identified the approaches to theory development applied to the qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. There are three approaches to theory development, namely: deduction, abduction and induction. A deductive approach involves the testing of a theoretical proposition by the employment of a research strategy that proceeds from general to specific knowledge through logical argument. An abductive approach involves the collection of data to explore a phenomenon to identify themes and explain patterns; and to generate a new theory or to modify an existing theory that is subsequently tested. An inductive approach involves the development of a theory as a result of the observation of empirical data (Ary *et al* 2018; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2016). In this study, the inductive approach was used for the qualitative study and a deductive approach was used for the quantitative study.

According to Saunders and Lewis (2012), the inductive approach is more open-ended and exploratory. Inductive reasoning was employed in this study to explore the constructs that contribute to the measurement of IIC based on

existing perspectives, the communication systems that employees are exposed to in the Library and the latest developments in the field of organisational communication.

According to Creswell (2014), the deductive approach involves the researcher testing or verifying a theory; testing hypotheses and research questions; defining and operationalising constructs derived from the survey; and measuring or observing constructs by using a research tool or instrument to obtain scores. In this study, the researcher used the deductive approach to test whether the designed measuring tool was measuring the integrated internal communication of the Unisa Library.

## **5.5 Methodological choices**

There are three approaches to research: qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods (Creswell 2014; Bryman & Bell 2015; Salkind 2010). This study used a mixed method approach. According to Bryman and Bell (2015), a mixed method approach combines the use of both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Gay, Mills and Airasian (2011) further point out that the mixed method includes both qualitative and quantitative data in a single study with the purpose of building synergy and strength between the two approaches to understand a phenomenon more fully. In this study, the qualitative research examines the phenomena within the cultural and social context in which it takes place by exploring and understanding the meaning that individuals ascribed to the identified problem and the quantitative research tests objective theories by examining the relationship among constructs (Salkind 2010; Creswell 2014).

Qualitative research usually focuses on the total picture and emphasises words rather than the quantification conducted in the collection and analysis of data, while quantitative research emphasises quantification in the collection and analysis of data (Ary *et al* 2018; Bryman & Bell 2015).

Saunders and Lewis (2012) distinguish between three key research methods: exploratory, explanatory and descriptive. Exploratory studies are the kind of research that aims at seeking new insights; asking new questions; and assessing topics in a new light. Explanatory studies involve the type of research that focuses on studying a situation or a problem with the intention of explaining the relationships between constructs. Descriptive studies are the kind of research that accurately describes the characteristics of the relevant phenomenon. According to Creswell (2014), explanatory and descriptive studies are quantitative in nature and exploratory studies are of qualitative nature.

This study is both exploratory and descriptive, making use of the exploratory sequential mixed method design that combines the qualitative and quantitative research methods (Creswell 2015). The qualitative data collection preceded the quantitative data collection to ensure the enrichment of data (Kumar 2014). While the qualitative method explores the concept of IIC in the Unisa Library and generates inferences or theories, the quantitative method tested the identified theories by describing the concept more accurately in measurable terms (Bryman 2016; Creswell 2015; Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter 2006).

The combination of multiple research methods in one study is called *triangulation*, which is defined as the use of two or more independent sources of data or data collection methods within one study, in order to make sure that the data are telling the researcher what he/she thinks they are telling him/her (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2016). Triangulation introduces the idea of looking at constructs from multiple points of view, which improves the accuracy (Neuman 2014) and reduces bias associated with the use of one method (Maxwell 2013).

## **5.6 Research strategy**

Research strategy is the general plan of how the researcher will go about answering the research questions, whereas research design refers to the

framework for the collection and analysis of data to answer the research question and meet research objectives, providing reasoned justification of the choice of data sources, collection methods and analysis techniques (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2016).

Research design comprises of the overall structure of the research (Tavakoli 2012; Maxwell 2013). In this study, the research design is the type of enquiry that uses the mixed method approach that combines the qualitative and quantitative research and assists in the collection, measurement and analysis of data by asking questions regarding the what, where, when and how much concerning the research study (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018). Wagner, Kawulich and Garner (2012) compare the research design to an architectural blueprint that explains how the research will be conducted, based on the research question.

Good research designs link research questions to methods of enquiry, such as the qualitative and quantitative methods, and promote efficient and successful functioning, while a flawed design leads to poor operation or failure (Maxwell 2013; Howes 2015). In contrast, Zikmund, Babin, Carr and Griffin (2013) argue that there is no better research design: different research designs are used for the benefit of an individual research study.

As highlighted in the title, the research design for this study is the case study. Case studies apply both the exploratory and descriptive research designs that allow the use of multiple data collection techniques to strengthen and confirm the results. The systematic process followed in the case study assist the researcher to gain a holistic view of the organisation and the phenomenon under investigation and to discover emergent issues by extracting valuable information from staff and documents. The case study does not investigate the entire organisation, the focus is on areas of interest (Noor 2008).

The mixed method is beneficial for this case study, because it is based on a process approach that generates useful findings; offers complete answers to the research questions; reduces biases associated with each method; and provides a sense of credibility among audiences (Bryman 2016).

In terms of the qualitative study, a phenomenological research design was used. A phenomenological research design is a qualitative design in which the researcher tries to understand people's perceptions and perspectives relative to a particular situation (Leedy & Ormrod 2015). This approach is centred on the perceptions of participants. The researcher accepts the participant's representation of events as being true and does not impose his/her own representation on the research process. This design was used in this study to enable the researcher to develop a tool for measuring the IIC of the Library. It also enabled the researcher to obtain new insights into the phenomenon and to develop new methods in addressing the concept of IIC.

The quantitative study adopted the descriptive research design, which attempts to describe or define the subject, often by creating a profile of a group of problems, people, or events, through the collection of data and the tabulation of the frequencies on research constructs or their interaction. This study revealed the who, what, when, where, or how much. The study was further concerned with a univariate question or hypothesis in which the researcher asked questions about the size, form, distribution, or the existence of a construct (Cooper & Schindler 2014). Leedy and Ormrod (2015) identify the following four descriptive research designs: observational studies, correlational research, developmental design and survey research. This study used both the correlational and the survey research.

Correlational research determines the relationship between two or more constructs that change together, such that systematic changes in one construct accompany systematic changes in the other construct. In this study, correlational research was used to determine whether the constructs measuring

IIC in the Library were related; and to determine whether the different internal stakeholders or employees gave the same views on the same construct (Cooper & Schindler 2014).

Survey research is a descriptive research study in which a large number of people are asked questions and their responses are tabulated in an effort to identify general patterns or trends in a certain population. It involves the acquisition of information by asking questions regarding the characteristics, opinions, attitudes, or previous experiences of a group of people with the aim of investigating a large population by conducting a survey on a sample of that population. In this study, participants were asked questions on issues involving the IIC of the Library (Leedy & Ormrod 2015).

## **5.7 Population**

The *population* is defined as all members of a defined class of people who are of interest in a study; the total quantity; a large group of many cases or a full universe of people under investigation to which results are generalised or applied (Ary *et al* 2018; Salkind 2017; Tavakoli 2012; Neuman 2014; Mertens 2015). The identified cases are included in the study as research subjects or items in the category of things that are being researched (Matthews & Ross 2010; Walliman 2011; Denscombe 2014). The population shares one or more publicly verifiable characteristics (Walliman 2011; Mertens 2015, Neuman 2014; Weathington, Cunningham & Pittenger 2012). The sample elements used in the investigation are selected from the population (Kumar 2014).

In terms of the quantitative study, the population should be representative of the total quantity of cases of people who are of interest in the study and are categorised in terms of demographic characteristics such as gender, which is measured in terms of males or females; age, which is measured in a ratio such as years; and other constructs to allow for a generalisation of the research findings (Tavakoli 2012; Neuman 2014). Kumar (2014) further indicates that

demographic characteristics are defined as personal characteristics or attributes that include age, gender, race, religion and length of tenure. Such attributes are objective; represent the level of diversity; and can be obtained easily from the human resource records of an organisation. Demographic data provide statistics on how representative and diverse the population is.

In this study, the total population comprised all employees at all branches of the Unisa Library. Employees were categorised in terms of characteristics or attributes that were considered as part of the demographic details in the study, including gender, age, educational qualifications, occupational categories and years of experience.

#### **5.7.1 *Target population***

*Target population* refers to the real population of interest to the study that consists of characteristics that can be measured (Cooper & Schindler, 2014; Zikmund *et al* 2013). Neuman (2014) defines the target population as a concretely specified large group of many cases that are the subjects of the study and from which the researcher draws a sample. The target population provides the required information that answers a research question and from which the research results or findings will be generalised (Kumar 2014; Neuman 2014).

In this study, the target population was employees at the Unisa Library, who were identified as participants and from whom the required information that answers the research question were obtained to arrive at the research findings. The ideas and opinions of employees assisted in identifying the communication methods, constructs and systems that contribute to the development of a measuring tool for integrated internal communication in the Unisa Library.



### **5.7.2 Accessible population**

*Accessible population* refers to the units of analysis, which consist of individual employees to which the researcher has access (Neuman 2014; Burns & Grove 2009; Matthews & Ross 2010; De Vaus 2014). Units of analysis are organised into different categories called *strata*, which impact on the selection of the sample, data collection and the research findings (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter 2006).

In this study, the current accessible population consisted of 222 individual employees in the Unisa Library, based at the Muckleneuk Campus in Pretoria, Gauteng Province. Employees were divided into the following five occupational categories or strata, depending on their roles and responsibilities in the hierarchical structure of the Library:

- 2 members of the Executive Management;
- 92 members of the Information Resource Distribution;
- 45 members of the Information Resource Content Management;
- 32 members of the Library Corporate Services, and
- 51 members of the Client Services.

## **5.8 Sampling**

*Sampling* refers to the way a study selects its participants (Rubin & Bellamy 2012). A sample is a selection of some cases drawn from the accessible population or a subset from a larger population that represents the entire population from which it will be drawn (Salkind 2017; Matthews & Ross 2010; Zikmund *et al* 2013; Weathington, Cunningham & Pittenger 2012). A sample is further defined as a small group that is a portion of the larger pool from which data will be collected and from which the population should be generalised (Tavakoli 2012; Neuman 2014; Mertens 2015).

In mixed methods research, sampling entails the procedures for selecting participants in both the qualitative and quantitative research designs (Creswell, 2015). The primary purpose of sampling is to avoid systematic biases and to create a representative population (Denzin & Lincoln 2011; Neuman 2014).

Sampling reduces research costs; promotes the availability of population elements; accelerates the speed of data collection; and provides greater accuracy in measuring attributes such as behaviour, attitudes or knowledge, which results in accurate research findings (Cooper & Schindler 2014). Cooper and Schindler (2014) further argue that the validity of the sample depends on how accurate and precise the sample represents the characteristics of the population that it is expected to represent.

In this study, the entire population at the Unisa Library cannot be investigated, due to time and cost constraints involved in data collection. A representative sample was used to avoid bias and to ensure accuracy in measuring employee attributes such as behaviour, attitudes or knowledge.

#### **5.8.1 Sample size**

The *sample size* refers to the number of individuals that describes the characteristics of the target population from whom the study information is obtained (Weathington, Cunningham & Pittenger 2012; Mertens 2015). According to Field (2013) and Creswell (2015), larger sample sizes are better and often create less room for error and produce accurate estimates, although Wimmer and Dominick (2011) argue that a large population may result in time and cost constraints. The sample size is usually denoted with the letter *n* (Kumar 2014).

In this study, the sample size will be informed by the total number of individuals that comprises the staff complement and the five occupational categories of the accessible population (Wagner, Kawulich & Garner 2012). For the qualitative

study, sampling was done until data saturation point was achieved. A data saturation point is reached when a researcher gathering data for the project no longer find any new thoughts, feelings, attitudes, emotions, intentions, etc. (Quinlan, Babin, Carr, Griffin & Zikmund 2015).

The quantitative study used the following guidelines proposed by Gay, Mills and Airasian (2011:139):

- If the population is 100 or fewer, do not sample: rather take the entire population as your sample.
- If the population size is around 500 (give or take 100), 50% should be sampled.
- If the population size is around 1 500, 20% should be sampled.
- Beyond a certain point (about N = 5 000), the population size is almost irrelevant and a sample size of 400 will be adequate.

As mentioned in Paragraph 5.7, the accessible population for this study consists of a total of 222 participants. A sample of nine (9) participants was involved in the pre-test of the measuring tool, giving a total of 213. Using the guidelines provided by Gay, Mills and Airasian (2011), 50% of the participants from whom the sample should be made consisting of 213, giving the sample of 107 participants.

### **5.8.2 Sampling design**

Sampling design, which is also referred to as *sampling strategy*, is the selection of the sample from the accessible population (Kumar 2014). Sampling design is informed by the research design (Neuman 2014). Different sampling methods can be used in research investigations. The sampling design for this study was informed by the mixed research design, which consists of two sampling methods: the qualitative and the quantitative research methods.

#### **5.8.2.1 Sample for qualitative method**

Purposive or judgmental sampling design, which is suitable for an exploratory study, was used to determine the sample for the qualitative interviews (Denscombe 2014). Purposive sampling is a nonprobability sampling technique that is based on the researcher's personal judgement about some appropriate characteristics or attributes of the sample members or a relatively small number (Kumar 2014; Zikmund *et al* 2013).

Purposive sampling is non-random: participants are "hand-picked", based on the relevance of the issue being investigated and the knowledge about the topic of the investigation (Neuman 2014; Denscombe 2014:41). The selected participants should best help the researcher in understanding the central phenomenon being explored and be able and willing to provide or share the required information needed to achieve the objectives of the study, so as to enable the researcher to explore the research questions in depth (Creswell 2015; Kumar 2014; Matthews & Ross 2010).

In this study, the researcher identified members of management as the relevant sample elements, based on their attributes, which included the execution of their leadership role that placed them in a better position to understand the strategic objectives and the IIC system of the Library. The selected sample was likely to provide the required information and valuable insight needed to explore the IIC of the Unisa Library for the achievement of the objectives of the study due to their expertise and experience.

The identified qualitative sample for semi-structured interviews was relatively small, consisting of 20 members of management based at the Muckleneuk Campus of the Unisa and were categorised as follows:

- One Executive Director;
- One Deputy Executive Director;
- Four Directors;
- Seven Deputy Directors;

- Six Managers; and
- One Head of structure.

Management members were approached telephonically to schedule interview appointments. The researcher requested for contact details (telephone numbers and email addresses) of potential participants from the designated contact person to schedule appointments.

The sampling criteria adopted in this study included data saturation. Saturation occurs when conceptual categories, themes or constructs that contribute to the research phenomenon have been adequately populated or saturated and no new or little meaningful information or insight is obtained from new participants, which serves as an indication of the adequacy of the sample size. Saturation can be reached early – between seven (7) and twelve (12) interviews – or later, after 103 interviews for large research populations, when repetition in data is observed. This serves as an indication of the lack of agreed guidelines on the achievement of data saturation (Creswell 2015; Zikmund *et al* 2013; Kumar 2014; Bryman 2016).

Saturation prevents larger samples than needed by marking the point at which the researcher stops collecting new material as interviews are not adding anything to the unfolding data analysis (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter 2006). In addition, Francis, Johnston, Robertson, Glidewell, Entwistle, Eccles and Grimshaw (2010) indicate that data saturation determines if theory-based interviews achieve an adequate sample for content validity. Walker (2012) argues that the issue of how many cases are enough for the study will depend on the details gathered in each case. In this study, the researcher examined the redundancy of data during the interview process.

Although there is no agreed method or clarity as to when data saturation is achieved (Francis *et al* 2010; Walker 2012), Walker (2012) argues that data saturation is a useful and critical methodological concept for ensuring that

adequate and quality data is collected. However, researchers whose sampling is guided by data saturation are cautioned to clarify how they reached saturation in their studies (Walker 2012).

Based on the foregoing discussion, this study considered data saturation as the most appropriate method of sampling for qualitative data collection. Data saturation was considered during the interviews to determine the adequacy of the sample size and to prevent larger samples that waste time and resources. The researcher had the responsibility of examining when redundancy is experienced in terms of the lack of new information that could contribute to the internal communication system of the Unisa Library. Out of the identified sample of 20 participants, data saturation was reached after conducting interviews with 15 participants. The sample was informed by the lack of new ideas on the concepts being explored.

#### **5.8.2.2 Sample for quantitative method**

Probability sampling designs were used to determine the sample for the quantitative survey method, with the objective of achieving a representative sample (Matthews & Ross 2010). Stratified random sampling, which divides the population into distinctly different categories or “strata” (Walliman 2011:186), groups or sub-populations to select cases from each category, was used in this study to ensure a representation of all groups of employees in a sample (Zikmund *et al* 2013; Wagner, Kawulich & Garner 2012).

Disproportionate stratified random sampling can be considered in cases where one stratum is over-represented or oversampled. For example, the Executive Management category was divided into males and females and further divided into ages and years of work experience. Disproportionate stratified sample can be justified for heterogeneous strata and when the sample is too small to investigate. Every individual in the population has an equal probability of being selected in the sample (Creswell 2015).

Within each strata, random sampling was used. Random sampling is a meaningful sampling strategy, because only individuals who are available or volunteer to participate in the study are considered (Creswell 2015). Each element of the population has equal and independent probability of being selected into the sample (Kumar 2014; Neuman 2014; Zikmund *et al* 2013). Random sampling was identified to be feasible for survey research and highly representative of the whole population, based on factors such as the avoidance of bias, which is prejudiced in favour of a group (Matthews & Ross 2010). The selection of a representative sample size is based on the identification of members of the population and characteristics of the population such as age and gender (Matthews & Ross 2010; Babbie & Mouton 2001).

Rea and Parker (2014:165) assert that there are “no fixed criteria” for determining the sample size for the survey and that the margin of error or reduction of uncertainty can be used in accordance with the goals and objectives of the study. Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006) refer to the margin of error as the sample error that measures the degree of error associated with using a sample to estimate the population. The margin of error is based on the probability that large samples produce a smaller margin of error or uncertainty and increase the level of confidence in the accuracy of the sample. As the sample size increases, the sampling error decreases (Rea & Parker 2014). Cooper and Schindler (2014) believe that the understanding of the various sources of error helps researchers to avoid or diminish such error.

In this study, the identified sample for the survey consisted of 107 participants based at the Muckleneuk campus of the Unisa Library in Pretoria, as discussed in Paragraph 5.8.1.

## **5.9 Data collection methods**

Data are known facts that are used as the basis for inference (Collis & Hussey 2014). In this study, an exploratory sequential mixed design was used to collect data. (Creswell & Creswell 2018). Kumar (2014) defines the mixed design as a social enquiry approach that uses two or more methods in undertaking a research study. The mixed method, which consists of the qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection, was considered as the best option in this study to enhance the accuracy and meaningfulness of research results. The sequential order followed in this study is such that the qualitative method preceded the quantitative method to ensure the enrichment of data (Kumar 2014).

According to Saunders and Lewis (2012), the final layer of the research onion, before reaching the core, highlights the time horizon over which the researcher undertook the research. The same layer also highlights the stage at which research is undertaken to answer a question or address a problem at a particular time. This “snapshot” is cross-sectional and is likely to make use of strategies such as a survey or case study. In terms of time horizon, a cross-sectional design was used for the study. According to Cooper and Schindler (2014), a cross sectional study is a study conducted only once and reveals a snapshot of one point in time. A cross sectional design is a research design that entails the collection of data on more than one case and at a single point in time. Qualitative and quantitative data have been collected in connection with two or more constructs, which are then examined to detect patterns of association (Bryman, Bell, Hirschsohn, Dos Santos, Du Toit, Masenge, Van Aardt & Wagner 2014).

The data collection timeline was as follows: qualitative data were collected over a period of one month; the pre-test of the measurement tool was conducted over a period of one month; and the final quantitative survey was conducted over a period of one and a half months. The total period of data collection was three and a half months.



### **5.9.1 Phase 1: Qualitative data collection method**

The qualitative data collection method served as the first phase of data collection in this study, and involved the collection of data that is not characterised by numbers, but textual in nature, and directed at the construction of social reality, based on the philosophy of ontology (Creswell, 2015). Texts are recognised as a communication medium used in measuring symbolic meaning in content analysis (Neuman, 2014). Qualitative data collection methods are exploratory and focus on building patterns, categories or themes by organising data into abstract units of information building towards the development of the quantitative measuring tool (Creswell 2014; Zikmund *et al* 2013).

According to Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006), researchers use the qualitative data collection method in situations where important constructs and the means of measuring them are not known. The method is associated with inductive exploration of the phenomenon and is considered a researcher's self-initiated process rather than an off-the-shelf process when compared with quantitative research (Greener 2008; Maxwell 2013). In exploring the phenomenon of IIC, open-ended personal interviews were used (Kumar 2014).

In this study, qualitative data collection was conducted with a small number of members of management through open-ended, semi-structured face-to-face interviews by using the interview schedule (Addendum A) to obtain the participants' verbal and spoken narratives that yielded rich information. Participants were allowed to express their own ideas, opinions, motivations and perceptions. Textual data were used to build themes, patterns and categories that were interpreted towards the development of the IIC measurement tool, which was used in the second phase of data collection, involving a large sample of the population. Findings from qualitative interviews were used to adapt the quantitative measurement tool.

#### 5.9.1.1 Semi-structured interviews

An interview is a qualitative research method characterised by a social relationship between the participant and the researcher, which involves oral questioning for the exchange of information (Creswell 2015; Ary *et al* 2018). Semi-structured interviews are used to gather data on organisational issues such as organisational culture that are intangible and unmeasurable, consisting of aspects such as values, beliefs and problems (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2011). Robbins and Judge (2013) describe values as basic convictions that influence a person's attitude, motivation and perceptions.

Semi-structured interview questions were guided by the participants' responses. The interviewer had the flexibility in terms of the use of words; asking of questions; explaining concepts; and the sequence of questions (Kumar 2014). The method stimulated the interviewees' point of view, in terms of what they considered relevant and important (Bryman 2016). According to Low (2013), semi-structured interviews provide the researcher with the participants' words, which must be presented *verbatim* in data analysis to preserve the meaning (Zikmund *et al* 2013).

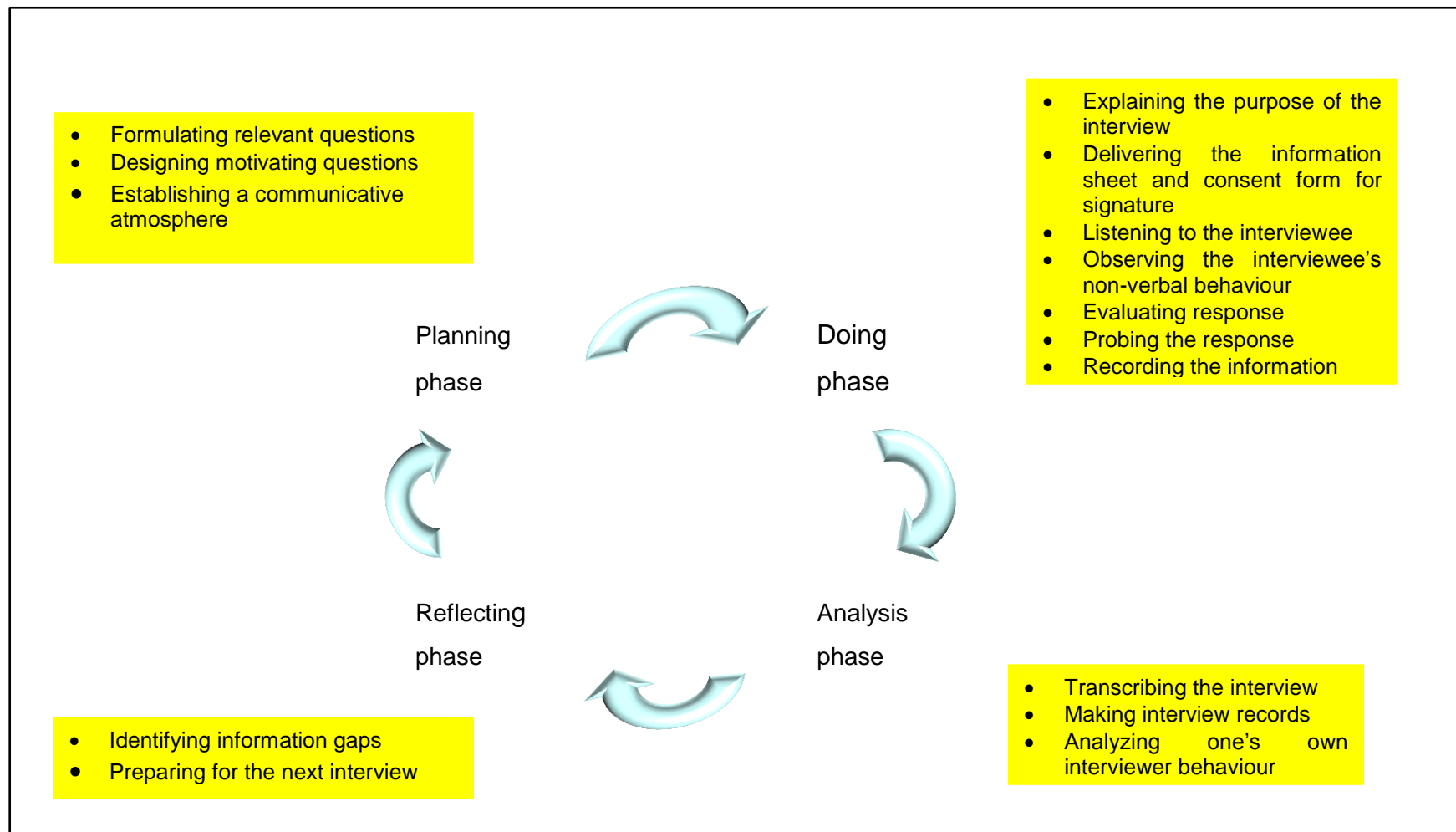
Face-to-face qualitative interviews provided direct interaction with the interview setting and behaviour of participants. This assisted the interviewer to gain the participants' understanding, knowledge of and insight into the phenomenon under investigation; and to observe the non-verbal response or cues (Walliman 2011). The interviewer was able to allocate categories to each element of the behaviour (Bryman & Bell 2015; Judge & Townend 2013). The interviews were audio-recorded and permission to record was requested from participants to ensure the accurate capturing of data (Judge & Townend 2013).

Interviews enabled the interviewer to ask participants to answer questions with the intention of exploring the research topic in detail; clarify questions; and

make follow-ups to obtain viewpoints, opinions and perceptions of participants based on their experiences (Walliman 2011; Weathington, Cunningham & Pittenger 2012; Judge & Townend 2013; Zikmund *et al* 2013).

Interviews are recognised as the most commonly used source of data gathering and semi-structured interviews are regarded as cost-effective, when compared with depth interviews in generating results that can be interpreted easily (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter 2006; Zikmund *et al* 2013). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) argue that interviews are costly at times, because they require administration, transcription and the use of computerised software systems.

As outlined in Figure 5.2, the following steps were involved in the interview cycle: the planning phase, the implementation or doing phase, the analysis phase and the reflecting phase.



**Figure 5.2: The interview cycle (Adapted from Keenan, Van Teijlingen & Pitchforth 2005:41)**

Previous studies (Meintjes & Steyn 2006; Zijze-Koning & De Jong 2007) support the use of interviews as a critical method for diagnosing management communication problems and identifying the main strengths and weaknesses in the communication of an organisation. Recommendations indicated that the interview method should precede the survey method, in order to “establish management communication problems” (Meintjes & Steyn 2006:186). In this study, the findings of the qualitative interviews informed the quantitative survey questionnaire.

In any research, participants should be contacted prior to conducting interviews, ensuring that they are involved in the process (Judge & Townsend 2013). In this study, participants in the interview process were recruited telephonically before scheduling appointments for interviews.

### **5.9.2 Phase 2: Quantitative data collection method**

The quantitative data collection method commenced as the second phase of data collection in this study. Quantitative data collection focuses on establishing the cause of the phenomena by providing factual and descriptive information that is presented by assigning numbers in an ordered and meaningful manner (De Vaus 2014; Zikmund *et al* 2013). Communication problems are diagnosed to establish areas of communication strengths and weaknesses (Zijze-Koning & De Jong 2015; Hogard & Ellis 2006). Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006) assert that quantitative research makes sense when important constructs and ways of measuring them are known.

An online survey was used in this study, because it is easy to complete; flexible to use; allows the respondent to move easily between questions; allows ease of data storage and analysis; is fast and cost-effective, convenient, easy to follow-up and; provides the respondent with the privacy, security and confidentiality of information. The respondent enters the answers on the computer and

questionnaires can reach respondent in remote areas (Bailey 2008; Wagner, Kawulich & Garner 2012; Rea & Parker 2014).

It has been argued that information technology systems, such as emails, simplify the process of data gathering. This process entails the development and testing of a survey tool; development of a list of emails addressed of all participants; sending an invitation to participate; including a hyperlink to the survey; survey completion with automatic data capturing; and tabulation and analysis, interpretation and report writing (Hargie & Tourish 2009). The researcher needed contact points of the research population, such as the list of names, e-mail addresses, phone numbers and any other details that assisted in the interaction with the population (Denscombe 2014).

In this study, the online self-administered survey questionnaire was used to pretest the measurement tool. The online survey was created by using the MonkeySurvey software. A weblink was created and embedded in the email in distributing the survey questionnaire to potential respondents, entrusting them with the responsibility of reading and answering research questions at their own time. Data were collected on the demographics, beliefs, behaviour and attitude of employees towards the IIC of the Unisa Library.

The response rate was very low, in that only one response was received in a period of two weeks. Interventions were made through the Library management to request members to complete the online survey. Nine responses were received out of the total sample of twenty employees. As a result, the final survey was conducted by means of printed survey questionnaires that were distributed to potential respondents. Questionnaires were distributed to managers, who, in turn, distributed them to members within their directorates. Telephonical contacts were made with each manager in distributing and collecting questionnaires.

### **5.9.3 Exploratory sequential mixed methods design**

The exploratory sequential mixed methods design addresses the mixture of the qualitative (open-ended) and quantitative (closed-ended) strands of the research. The two methods of data collection, as discussed in Paragraphs 5.9.1 and 5.9.2, were integrated through merging, connecting and embedding the data. Types of mixed methods range from the convergent parallel mixed methods design, explanatory sequential mixed methods design, exploratory sequential mixed methods design and several advanced mixed methods designs (Creswell 2014).

This study adopted the exploratory sequential mixed method design, which starts with a qualitative phase, followed by a quantitative phase. The qualitative research phase explores the views of participants first and the data is analysed and used to build into a second, quantitative phase or “to build an instrument” (Creswell & Creswell 2018:15). In this research, the following three steps were applied: the researcher explored qualitative data and analysis; the findings were used to develop the IICA tool, which was administered to a sample of the accessible population in the Unisa Library. Data collection “run in sequence” (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2011:120), starting with the qualitative interviews in which participants are presented with questions on matters of fact, attitudes, beliefs, prejudices, preferences or opinions, followed by the quantitative survey questionnaire in which respondents are asked questions about the degree of their agreement or disagreement with the impact of different aspects of the IIC of the Library (De Vos *et al* 2011).

The quantitative database built on the results of the initial qualitative database, with the intentions of observing data from a few individuals that can be generalised to a large sample and to develop better measurements with specific samples of the population (Creswell 2014). Although the qualitative measures are likely to yield superficial information when measuring issues of organisational culture, Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2011) argue that a mixed method is reliable because of the use of verbal and numerical data.

## **5.10 Measurement instruments**

In Chapter 1, it was posited that measurement instruments are central to any empirical study (Kumar 2014). They are informed by the research design and take the form of “structured interviewing schedules, questionnaires, checklists, indexes and scales” De Vos *et al* (2011:171). Qualitative research uses descriptive statements to ask questions, whereas the quantitative research uses measurement scales and asks respondents to make a choice (Kumar 2014).

It is argued that measurement instruments measure active and attribute constructs under investigation that can be manipulated or changed by the researcher, such as the population sample, and attribute constructs that cannot be manipulated or controlled by the researcher, such as demographic or biographic characteristics (Kumar 2014). The demographic characteristics of employees that informed this study are identified in Paragraph 5.7.

The measurement instruments that informed the proposed IICA tool include: the existing or traditional communication audit instruments that consist of the communication satisfaction questionnaire (CSQ), the International Communication Association (ICA) audit, the Organisational Culture Survey (OCS) and the Critical Incident Technique (CIT). Constructs from the traditional instruments were integrated with constructs informed by literature and used in the first phase of data collection to develop an interview schedule.

This study made use of two types of measurement instruments as informed by the sequential mixed research design: the semi-structured interview schedule, which collected qualitative data on issues of fact, such as the attitudes and feelings of employees; and the online survey questionnaire, which consisted of a mixture of closed-ended and open-ended questions used to collect quantitative data on biographic and active constructs. An open-ended question



on the online survey addressed the critical incident techniques in line with the CIT instrument.

#### **5.10.1 The interview schedule**

The measurement instrument for qualitative data collection was a semi-structured interview schedule, which consisted of a written schedule of carefully structured questions that asked participants specific open-ended questions that provide a frame of reference without limiting responses, with the ability to address specific issues (Kumar 2014; Cooper & Schindler 2014). Bryman (2016) refers to an interview schedule as a collection of questions designed by the interviewer to generate new knowledge. Interview questions are developed by an interviewer through the translation of the research objectives to address the research problem (Cooper & Schindler 2014; Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2011). Questions on the schedule were divided into sections to address specific conceptual categories or constructs, and the responses are usually easier to interpret (Zikmund *et al* 2013).

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) argue that face-to-face interviews may be intimidating and that people find it difficult to articulate responses and constructs on issues of organisational culture. In this study, the researcher developed an interview schedule by translating the research objectives into research questions to explore the communication system of the Unisa Library. When administering the interview schedule, the researcher allowed employees to determine key issues based on their knowledge and insight. Qualitative interview questions measure constructs that focus on issues of facts, opinion and attitude based on perceptions, views, beliefs and feelings of participants (Kumar 2014; Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2011).

The interview schedule consisted of open-ended questions that addressed the following specific issues:

- Availability of an internal communication audit instrument for the Unisa Library;
- Communication audit constructs;
- Internal communication systems used in the Library;
- Exploring the latest development or emerging trends in the field of organisational communication, with the focus on: transformation, employment equity, black economic empowerment, changes in information technology affecting the internal communication system of the Library, changes in government action affecting the communication system of the Library, customised services; and
- The multicultural perspective, with the focus on: values of the Library, the different cultures of individual employees, ethnic groups of employees, the diversity of employees and the influence that employees have on the communication system of the Library.

#### **5.10.2 The survey questionnaire**

A questionnaire is a method of data collection that enlists questions that translate research objectives into specific questions (Lal Das 2017). Survey questionnaires are useful instruments for obtaining information from respondents at a particular point in time or gathering data that can be processed statistically, by describing the nature of existing conditions (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2011; Kumar 2014). Closed-ended questions are often used to establish communication strength and weaknesses of the communication system of an organisation by establishing the extent to which an individual employee is satisfied with the integrated internal communication of an organisation (Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2015; Hogard & Ellis 2006). The closed-ended survey questionnaire is the most preferred instrument that presents the respondent with a set of possible answers, in the form of the matrix or rating scale that asks the respondent to provide written responses to questions or mark items that indicate their responses (Bryman 2016; Cooper & Schindler 2014; Weathington, Cunningham & Pittenger 2012; Ary *et al* 2018).

The survey questionnaire may use rating scale questions that offer more than one alternative answer and request the respondent to make a single choice in a rating format. Due to their efficiency and simple unique structure, rating scales are recommended for studies that seek degrees of preferences, interest or agreements (Cooper & Schindler 2014). Rating scales are quick to administer to a larger population (Wagner, Kawulich & Garner 2012); inexpensive; save time; retrieve information from the primary source (Denscombe 2014); offer a clear and unambiguous ordinal scale of measurement (Weathington, Cunningham & Pittenger 2012); allow participants to indicate the extent of their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the communication that takes place in their environment (Neuman 2014); enhance comparability of answers; clarify the meaning of questions for a respondent; and make it easier to process answers (Bryman 2016) than face-to-face interviews (Walliman 2011). In a field where there is a strong body of existing theory, specific research questions are expected to exist and the researcher complements those questions with specific cases that verify or challenge certain ideas (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter 2006).

In this study, the adapted measurement instruments (CSQ, ICA, OCS & CIT) provided a strong body of specific research questions. Existing questions were complemented with specific questions that addressed the research problem to arrive at the proposed IICA tool for the Unisa Library. The structure of the IICA tool consisted of both closed-ended and open-ended questions. Closed-ended questions were informed by the CSQ, ICA and the OCS instruments, while the open-ended questions were informed by the CIT. The survey questionnaire consisted of four sections: demographics, communication constructs, organisational culture and communication experiences.

#### **5.10.2.1 The demographics**

The questions on demographics measured characteristics with more than one category, for example, gender had categories such as male and female that

could not be manipulated, changed or controlled (De Vaus 2014; Kumar 2014). This study consisted of eight demographic questions: gender, race, age, highest educational qualification, current position, directorate, the length of tenure or work experience and employment status (Kumar 2014; Rose, Spinks & Canhoto, 2015; Greef 2012).

#### **5.10.2.2 Communication constructs**

The communication constructs that were used in designing the proposed IICA were adapted from the CSQ by Meintjes and Steyn (2006) and the ICA audit, as adapted by Downs and Adrian (2004). The two instruments were recognised as the primary instruments that provided guidance in terms of the constructs used in this study (Creswell 2014). The following communication constructs were adopted in this study: informational, relational, informational/relational and organisational outcomes. Respondents were expected to rate constructed statements carefully, ranging from very negative to very positive attitudes towards the IIC of the Library (Zikmund *et al* 2013).

The informational construct consisted of the information received; information desired; sources of information; feedback on information sent; formal and informal channels of communication. The relational or relationships construct consisted of the relationships taking place between employees in the Library – i.e. between supervisors and subordinates and between co-workers. The information/relational constructs consisted of interaction between employees that took the form of performance feedback and communication on organisational matters, such as changes taking place in the Library. The organisational outcomes construct focused on the recognition of individual and organisational achievements, including the overall quality of service.

#### **5.10.2.3 Organisational culture**

The organisational culture constructs identified in this study is a new construct. The construct evaluates the multicultural aspects of organisational

communication and any other emerging trends in the field of organisational communication.

The following aspects identified in the literature, including the organisational culture survey and the qualitative interviews, were integrated into a single construct that addressed the culture prevailing in the Library: societal influence, which entails the following constructs: morale of employees and the involvement of employees in the activities of the organisation; changes in political environment in the form of government legislation that affects organisational communication activities such as the Protection of Private Information (PoPI) Act; employment equity, which addresses issues relating to the diversity of employees, such as the recognition of the communication needs of people with disabilities by providing communication infrastructure, such as audio, for people with hearing disabilities; the customisation of information services, which was identified as a good practice in the Library; and the construct of Ubuntu as an emerging trend that is practised in organisations in South Africa.

Compliance with organisational values was also identified as an important factor in the Library that delivers information services to clients. The Library Service Charter contains those values and employees are expected to comply with them (Scott *et al* 2003; Woldearegay 2013; Denison, Nieminen & Kotrba 2014).

#### **5.10.2.4 Communication experience**

Communication experience is a qualitative audit instrument (Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2007). The instrument was adapted for this study as a construct that focused on the positive or negative communication experiences that employees encountered in the organisation (Carvalho 2013).

The construct focused on the following issues: participants were asked to provide any work-related experiences that could have come to mind when

recording the responses on the survey by indicating the person to whom the experience relate to; to rate the level of effectiveness of the communication experience on a 5-Point scale ranging from very ineffective to very effective; to describe any positive or negative communication experiences; and to comment on how to improve the internal communication of the Library.

The survey questionnaire (see Addendum B) was the recommended tool for conducting the IICA in this study. Since the study was sequential, the survey questionnaire was adapted further by considering the findings or input from the qualitative interview study. The MonkeySurvey, which was an online survey software, was used to collect data from respondents in pretesting the proposed measuring tool.

### **5.11 Reliability and validity**

The reliability and validity of the measurement instrument are concerned with the adequacy of the measures, which is of great importance in any research study (Bryman, 2016).

#### **5.11.1 Reliability of the measuring instrument**

Reliability means consistency or dependability (Neuman 2014). When applied in research, reliability is an indicator of a measure's internal consistency, stability, predictability and trustworthiness of an instrument and its ability to measure the same thing more than once when used repeatedly under similar conditions (Zikmund *et al* 2013; De Vos *et al* 2011; Neuman 2014; Kumar 2014).

Internal consistency represents the extent to which each indicator of a concept converges on some common meaning (Zikmund *et al* 2013). Bryman (2016) believes that reliability is associated with the question of whether the results of a study can be repeated. Reliability and validity of a measurement instrument go

hand in hand: if a measurement instrument is unreliable, it cannot provide a valid measure.

Neuman (2014) indicates that reliability is easier to achieve than validity and, therefore, validity is important for a valid measure of a construct. The two concepts complement each other when evaluating the measurement. Babbie (2007) asserts that a reliable instrument has the ability to yield consistent results each time it is applied.

In this study, the pre-testing was conducted to test the reliability of the IICA measuring tool, so as to establish if there is a relationship between the identified constructs and if the IICA can yield consistent results when repeated under similar conditions. The research tool was pretested to ensure that there were no ambiguous questions; hence testing the reliability of the instrument. Pretesting is the assessment of questions and instruments before the start of a study – an established practice of discovering errors in the questions, question sequencing, instructions and the skip directions (Copper & Shindler 2014).

A *pre-test* is defined as a small-scale research study that collects data from respondents, similar to those that are used in the full study, with the purpose of refining or modifying the survey questionnaire and fine-tuning the research objectives, if deemed necessary. Pre-testing is typically performed on a small purposive sample to determine the feasibility and viability of the study. Pre-tests offer an indication of the size of response rate in the main survey (Kumar 2014; De Vos *et al* 2011; Zikmund *et al* 2013).

In this study, the pretesting was conducted after the development of the IICA measurement tool or questionnaire, to test its reliability. The pretest was conducted with a sample of 20 participants, who were recruited from the Unisa Library. The online SurveyMonkey was used to distribute the questionnaire to the identified sample and nine responses were received. The supervisor also

participated in the pre-testing to validate the IICA measuring tool before implementation to the larger population at the Unisa Library.

The original IICA tool consisted of 24 questions. However, the final measuring tool consisted of 23 questions after the pretest. One question (Q15), with seven statements addressing issues of information flow versus information communication technology, was removed after conducting the pretest. The Cronbach's alpha of the question was .645, which was acceptable. The degree of the reliability of the instrument was assessed by using the rule of thumb provided by Manerikar and Manerikar (2015), which states that if reliability is  $\geq .9$ , then it is excellent (high-stakes testing);  $\geq .7$  its good (low-stakes testing);  $\geq .6$  its acceptable;  $\geq .5$  its poor; and if it is  $< .5$ , it is unacceptable. The general agreed limit is .7, although it may decrease to .6 in exploratory research (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson 2014).

The overall results of the pretest on the proposed constructs are presented in Table 5.1.

**Table 5.1: Reliability results for the original IICA measurement tool**

Construct	No. of items	Cronbach's alpha	Acceptable level
Q9. Information received	7	.814	Good
Q10. Information desired	7	.903	Excellent
Q11. Sources of information	9	.827	Good
Q12. Feedback on communication sent	6	.881	Good
Q13. Information received through formal channels of communication	10	.874	Good
Q14 Information received through informal channels of	9	.861	Good



Construct	No. of items	Cronbach's alpha	Acceptable level
communication			
Q15. Information flow versus information communication technology	7	.654	Acceptable
Q16. Relational	9	.874	Good
Q17. Informational / relational	9	.810	Good
Q18. Organisational outcomes	7	.794	Good
Q19. Organisational culture	20	.901	Excellent
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>.976</b>	<b>Excellent</b>

### 5.11.2 Validity of the measuring instrument

*Validity* refers to the accuracy of a measure or the extent to which a score truthfully represents a concept that it is designed to measure, including the integrity of the conclusions generated by the research study (Neuman 2014; Zikmund *et al* 2013; Kumar 2014).

*Measurement validity* refers to the degree to which the measure truly reflects the concepts or the degree to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure (Bryman 2016; Weathington, Cunningham & Pittenger 2012). Neuman (2014) believes that the validity of the measurement depends on the fit between the construct and the indicator that it is supposed to measure.

The internal validity of the measurement tool focuses on the causal relationship between dependent and independent constructs in the study, as applied in quantitative research. IIC was a dependent construct and the key factor under investigation that could be affected by some other factors. The independent or

identified constructs, such as media quality and transformation, were the causes of the presumed changes (Robbins, Judge, Millett Boyle 2014).

*Ecological validity*, which is relevant to both the quantitative and qualitative research, is concerned with whether the social scientific findings of the instrument address real life conditions, opinions, knowledge, attitude and values of the subjects of the study, so as to avoid valid findings that do not impact on the lives of people who are being studied (Bryman 2016). *Content validity* entails the degree to which a measure (Zikmund *et al* 2013) or test appears to be valid to experts familiar with the constructs being measured (De Vos *et al*, 2011) or represents all aspects of the conceptual definition of a construct (Neuman 2014).

In this study, the internal validity of the IICA tool focused on the extent to which the IIC (dependent construct) could be affected by the identified constructs which included the transformation agenda; the advancement in technology; and the feedback that employees receive from their supervisors (independent construct). The validity of the IICA depends on the relationship between the two constructs.

External validity was established by assessing the extent to which the results could be generalised to the entire population, while the ecological validity was established by the impact that the study may have on the communication system of the Library. That can be assessed during data collection and on the impact of the findings on employees.

## **5.12 Data analysis**

Data are information collected as part of the research, that are analysed and interpreted, based on the research questions and the objectives of the study to produce results that serve as a product of the measurement (Weathington *et al* 2012; Bryman 2016). The purpose of data analysis is to study relationships

between constructs. Data analysis entails the application of reasoning to understand the data that have been gathered. Appropriate statistical analysis techniques are used to determine consistent patterns and summarise the relevant details revealed in the investigation (Zikmund *et al* 2013; Lal Das 2017:108).

#### **5.12.1 Qualitative data analysis**

Data analysis in qualitative studies, which commences after finishing the first interview, is guided by data saturation, which determines the adequacy and quality of data. The first step is reading the interview transcripts (Maxwell 2013; Walker 2012).

Methods of data analysis include content analysis, which is a research method or technique for systematically examining, coding and interpreting the content of information contained in written or spoken communication media. The content whose characteristics is analysed may be words, visual materials, meanings, ideas, themes or any communicated message captured in the interview transcripts as qualitative data with the purpose of auditing the communication content against the objectives of the study (Lal Das 2017; Ary *et al* 2018; Neuman 2014; Maxwell 2013).

Data cleaning entails the review of interview transcripts to determine their eligibility for analysis (Snelson 2016). The review process involves the reading of transcripts to eliminate irrelevant information and to consider the most relevant information that addresses the research questions. This results in reduced data (Maxwell 2013).

Interview transcripts were loaded into the ATLAS.ti. Software before conducting thematic content analysis, which involved the development of codes, themes and sub-themes that were interpreted to arrive at the findings. *Verbatim* quotes were used where necessary. In this study, interview transcripts were cleaned

before loading them into ATLAS.ti for analysis, which involves the creation of themes and sub-themes. The purpose of the research and the research questions were used to guide the qualitative data analysis process and to ensure that findings were aligned with the aim of the research.

According to Saldaña (2015), coding is applied to units of social organisation, such as cultural practices, roles, episodes, social and personal relationships, encounters, organisations, subcultures and lifestyles, groups and cliques, cognitive aspects or meaning, inequalities and hierarchical aspects, and emotional aspects or feelings. Robbins and Judge (2013) refer to emotional aspects as negative or positive feelings that are directed at someone or something. These emotional aspects may include anger, frustration, fear, joy, hate, envy, disappointment, surprise, jealousy, happiness, etc.

In the deductive method, a coding framework is decided upon in advance and codes are defined before and during data analysis. Existing theory or prior research findings are used to develop the initial coding scheme. As analysis proceeds, additional or new codes are identified, because they have the potential of contradicting, refining, enriching or extending the theory (Burnard, Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick 2008).

In this study, the deductive data analysis approach was adopted whereby thematic content analysis was applied to interview transcripts. Predetermined codes derived from existing literature were identified first, in order to develop the initial coding scheme before considering the emerging or new codes.

### **5.12.2 Quantitative data analysis**

Quantitative data analysis generates statistical findings. In this research, tables and graphs (e.g. bar charts, pie charts, histograms) were generated and interpreted to inform the findings. The researcher also evaluated literature

sources for relevancy as and when relevant information was obtained (Babbie & Mouton 2001).

Responses to the online survey questionnaire used during the pretest were analysed by using the software package called the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS). Lal Das (2017) refers to the SPSS as a powerful data processing and analysis software tailored to the requirements of the social science researchers.

The focus was on “measuring the dependent or outcome constructs”, which depends on the independent or predictor constructs. The independent construct causes some effect on the dependent construct, while the dependent construct is affected by changes in an independent construct (Field 2013:7). In this study, the changes that could be caused on the IIC (dependent) of the Library constructs (independent), such as the communication channels or feedback, were measured.

Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data.

#### **5.12.2.1 Descriptive statistics**

According to Keller (2018a), descriptive statistics deal with methods of organising, summarising and presenting data in a convenient and informative way. There are two forms of descriptive statistics, namely: graphical techniques and numerical techniques. The numerical techniques involve summary statistics, such as measures of central tendency and relative standing and dispersion, while graphical techniques involve graphs like histograms and boxplots.

Descriptive statistics were used in this research to present data, in order to determine patterns and trends in the data. The descriptive statistics used were means, standard deviations and coefficient of variations for continuous

constructs and frequencies and proportions for categorical data. The mean is the arithmetic average and one of the most commonly used measures of central tendency (Hair, Celsi, Money, Samouel & Page 2016). It is the score located at the mathematical centre of a distribution (Heiman 2015). Composite constructs were calculated by averaging items in a construct.

Standard deviation is a measure of variation. Variability provides a quantitative measure of the differences between scores in a distribution and describes the degree to which the scores are spread out or clustered (Gravetter & Wallnau 2017). Standard deviation is defined as the average difference between the scores in the distribution and the mean or central point of the distribution, or more precisely, the square root of the average squared deviation from the mean (Jackson 2014).

According to Babbie (2016), a higher standard deviation means that the data are more dispersed, whereas a lower standard deviation means that the data are more bunched together. The coefficient of variation of a set of observations is the standard deviation of the observations divided by their mean, which can be expressed as a percentage (Keller & Gaciu 2015). The closer the coefficient of variation is to 0%, the closer the values are to the mean and the more consistent the values are.

Cronbach alpha was used to measure the reliability of the instrument. According to Bryman and Bell (2015), Cronbach alpha is a commonly used test for internal reliability and it essentially calculates the average of all possible split-half reliability coefficients. The internal consistency is a measure of reliability, which examines the unidimensional nature of a test (Salkind 2018). According to Bryman and Bell (2015), the computed alpha coefficient will vary between 1 (denoting perfect internal validity) and 0 (denoting no internal validity).

#### 5.12.2.2 Correlation analysis

Correlation analysis was used to measure the extent or the degree of the relationship between the constructs. The Pearson correlation is a measure of the strength of the linear relationship between two normally distributed constructs (Hauke & Tomasz 2011). It measures the strength of the relationship between two constructs and it ranges from +1.00 to -1.00. If the correlation coefficient  $r = +1$ , it is a perfect positive relationship; if  $r = -1$ , it is a perfect negative relationship and if  $r = 0$ , there is no linear relationship (Brase & Brase 2015).

Salkind (2018) uses the “eyeball method” in which correlations of a certain value are associated with a certain nominal degree of relationship. The author gives the following rule of thumb by proposing that if  $r =$

- 0 to .2 – a weak or no relationship;
- .2 to .4 – weak relationship;
- .4 to .6 – moderate relationship;
- .6 to .8 – strong relationship; and
- .8 to 1.0 – very strong relationship.

The closer  $r$  is to +1 or -1, the better the relationship between the constructs (Brase & Brase 2015).

The effect size was used to describe the significant relationship between constructs. The effect size estimates the degree to which the phenomenon being studied (e.g. correlation or difference in means) exists in the population (Hair *et al* 2014). According to Gravetter and Wallnau (2017), the measure of effect size is intended to provide a measurement of the absolute magnitude of a treatment effect, independent of the size of the treatment effect and independent of the size of the sample(s) being used. The effect size of the independent t-tests, ANOVA and correlation are defined below.

### **Calculation for effect size for independent t-test**

Cohen (1988) proposes the following guideline for the calculation for effect size for independent t-test: the effect size can be described as small effect, with a value of .01; moderate effect with a value of .06; and large effect with a value of .14.

### **Calculation for effect size for ANOVA test**

The effect size for ANOVA tests is calculated by means of Eta squared ( $\eta^2$ ), which reflects the proportion of the total differences in the scores that are associated with differences between sample means, or how much of the variability in the dependent construct is attributable to the manipulation of the independent construct (Jackson 2014:234).

### **Calculation for effect size for regression and correlation analysis**

In correlation analysis, the coefficient of determination ( $r^2$ ) measures the effect size. According to Keller (2018b), the coefficient of determination measures the amount of variation in the dependent construct, which is explained by the variation in the independent construct, and it is calculated by squaring the correlation coefficient,  $r$ . It measures the amount of variability of the dependent construct, which is explained by the independent construct.

Graphical plots, known as *confidence interval error bars*, were used to show where differences exist. Error bars that overlapped indicated that the groups were not significantly different from one another. The more they overlap, the more similar the groups were.

## **5.13 Ethical considerations**

In order to prevent unethical practices and to ensure the protection of the rights, safety and dignity of participants, research ethics apply in any study that involves human participants. Research ethics are norms, guidelines and



standards of behaviour that the researcher displays in interaction with research subjects during the research process, so as to prevent any harm or adverse consequences that may arise from the research activities. Ethical guidelines ensure that participants have the right to know the nature and purpose of the study; the right to give or withhold informed consent; and the right to have their privacy respected (Ary *et al* 2018; Bryman 2016; Cooper & Schindler 2014).

In ensuring that the rights of participants were protected in this study, the researcher prepared the information sheet and the informed consent form (Matthews & Ross 2010). The information sheet explained aspects of the study to make sure that individual participants freely agreed to participate in the research (Neuman 2014) and that they understood what the researcher wanted from them before consenting to participate in the research (Zikmund *et al* 2013).

Ethical considerations also included getting permission from participants to involve them in the study (Warr, Guillemin, Cox & Waycott 2016). Afolabi, Afolabi and Faleye (2012) argue that respondents should be verbally asked to participate voluntarily in the study and also be asked to sign the informed consent form on completing the questionnaire. Matthews and Ross (2010) further indicate that participants should freely sign the informed consent.

Bryman (2016) argues that the introduction of computer-mediated communication introduces challenges when researchers collect data through the internet or online. Compliance with the requirements of informed consent, anonymity and the privacy of participants becomes questionable, because the origin of computer-generated messages reveals in the heading of the correspondence is difficult to remove. Public accessibility and transparency of the research data make it possible for other researchers to trace the analysis process (Holtz, Kronberger & Wagner 2012).

In this study, the researcher complied with ethical requirements and standards. Ethical clearance was obtained from both the Unisa College of Human Sciences

Research Ethics Committee (Addendum C) and the Unisa Senate Research and Innovation and Higher Degrees Committee (SRIHDC) (Addendum D). Sensitive material such as interview transcripts were protected by keeping them safe, and participants were protected by maintaining the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses. Online responses were only accessed for the purpose of this study and not for any other purpose.

Participants were given the information sheet explaining the purpose of the study and what was requested from them. During the semi-structured interviews, participants were asked to sign the informed consent – only if they agreed to participate in the study. In addition to explaining the voluntary participation and confidentiality, the online questionnaire contained a consent clause that read as follows, “If you would like to take part in this survey, please consent by clicking next”.

#### **5.13.1 *The informed consent***

The informed consent (Addendum E) must explain the following: what the researcher is doing and why; the authority that the researcher has; the risks involved in the research; the way in which data will be kept and disposed; the practical implications for participants; and that participation is voluntary and that participants have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, on condition that the researcher will not proceed with their data or interview (Greener 2008; Matthews & Ross 2010).

In this study, the informed consent was developed to protect the rights of participants. Participants were presented with an information sheet that provided them with information on the purpose of the study and they were asked to voluntarily participate in the study and sign the informed consent form. Participants were further informed that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time. The confidentiality of any information provided as part of the study was maintained.

### **5.13.2 The Participant Information Sheet**

Before signing the informed consent form, the participant was given the Participant Information Sheet, with the following details of the research that assisted in understanding the nature of the research (Unisa 2016): the title of the research; purpose of the study; reasons for choosing the participant; the participant's actual role in the study; statement that indicates that participation is voluntary; benefits for the participant or group; potential risks or harm, if any; that the confidentiality of information were maintained; that the security of data was maintained; that the study received approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee (ERC) at Unisa; that a copy of the approval letter could be availed to the participant if needed; and that the research findings could be obtained from the researcher if needed (Unisa 2016).

The ethical protection of participants included privacy or anonymity and confidentiality, which meant that participants remained nameless throughout the study and that their identity was protected from disclosure or remain unknown. The researcher had an obligation not to use participants' private information for any other purpose other than for the research (Neuman 2014; Warr, Guillemin, Cox & Waycott 2016). Ary *et al* (2018) emphasise that privacy in a study implies that any data that identified participants may not be made available without written permission of the concerned participant. A sample of the informed consent (Addendum E) and participant information sheet (Addendum F) is attached.

The Unisa Policy on Research Ethics (Unisa 2012) was applied throughout the study to make sure that the following key values are observed in protecting the integrity, rights and anonymity of participants and respondents: human dignity, equality, social justice, objectivity, fairness and respect for cultural differences.

In this study, participants were informed that the aim of the research was to conduct a study to develop a tool for measuring IIC at the Unisa Library to establish the strength and weaknesses of the internal communication system. Participants were assured that the privacy of their information or data was maintained and that such information was kept safe and used only for research purposes. Participants were also assured that their names would not be disclosed, so as to protect the anonymity and confidentiality of information provided (Neuman 2014). Confidentiality means that the information generated as part of the study is not to be shared with others (Zikmund *et al* 2013).

#### **5.14 Conclusion**

This chapter discussed the research methodology used in this study. The research onion was used to illustrate the research process followed in this study, in order to ensure the appropriateness of the research design.

The aim of the empirical investigation was to identify the measuring tool for IIC at the Unisa Library. The philosophical stance adopted for this study was interpretivism and positivism. In terms of the approach to theory development, inductive reasoning was employed to explore the concept of IIC and the deductive approach was used to test if the measuring tool could yield results that addressed the research problem.

This study used a sequential mixed method approach, which combines the use of both qualitative and quantitative research to investigate the research problem. The strategy applied involves the process in which the qualitative method preceded the quantitative method. The research design for qualitative study was exploratory, while the quantitative study used both the correlational and the survey research, which is a descriptive study that involves a large population. The population comprised of all employees at all branches of the Unisa Library and the accessible population consisted of 222 individual

employees, based on the Muckleneuk campus of the Unisa Library in Pretoria, Gauteng Province.

Semi-structured interviews and the survey questionnaire were used to collect data. For the qualitative study, sampling was based on data saturation and 50% of the accessible population was sampled for the quantitative study. The SurveyMonkey was used to collect data for pretesting the survey questionnaire. A pretest was conducted to test the reliability and validity of the survey instrument. ATLAS ti. was used for qualitative data analysis, using data contained in the interview transcripts, and the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) was used to analyse quantitative data collected by means of survey questionnaires.

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse quantitative data. The Pearson Coefficient Correlation was conducted to measure the relationship between constructs.

Ethical considerations were adhered to as part of this study, in that the details of the study were explained to the participants and the informed consent was used for the survey.

The next chapter will focus on the implementation of the theoretical framework, which entails the interpretation of qualitative data collected from members of management at the Unisa Library.

## **CHAPTER 6: FINDINGS OF THE QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS**

### **6.1 Introduction**

Chapter 5 provided the research design and methodology for this study. This chapter focuses on the results of the qualitative analysis of data collected through interviews. The interviews were conducted to address the following research objectives: to explore the integrated internal communication systems; and to explore the communication needs of employees in the Unisa Library.

Based on a comprehensive theoretical exploration and the proposed theoretical framework for the integrated internal communication audit (IICA), an interview schedule was developed. Interviews were conducted with members of management at the Unisa Library to establish their opinions and communication problems experienced, as they are responsible for communicating with employees.

Interview transcripts were developed and reviewed through data cleaning to determine their eligibility for analysis by eliminating irrelevant information and to consider the most relevant information that addressed the research question. The data cleaning process resulted in reduced data.

Since the purpose of the study was to identify the measurement tool for integrated internal communication at the Unisa Library, a sequential mixed method design was explored and the ATLAS.ti software package was used to analyse qualitative data. The results were used to inform the survey questionnaire to be used for the quantitative data collection.

The chapter is structured as follows: profile of the participants; research questions; overview of data analysis; and the analysis of the central themes and sub-themes.

## **6.2 Profile of the participants**

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with 15 members of management in the Unisa Library. Two African males and 13 females from different racial groups were interviewed, in order to obtain their ideas and opinions about their experiences of the internal communication system of the Library.

## **6.3 Research questions**

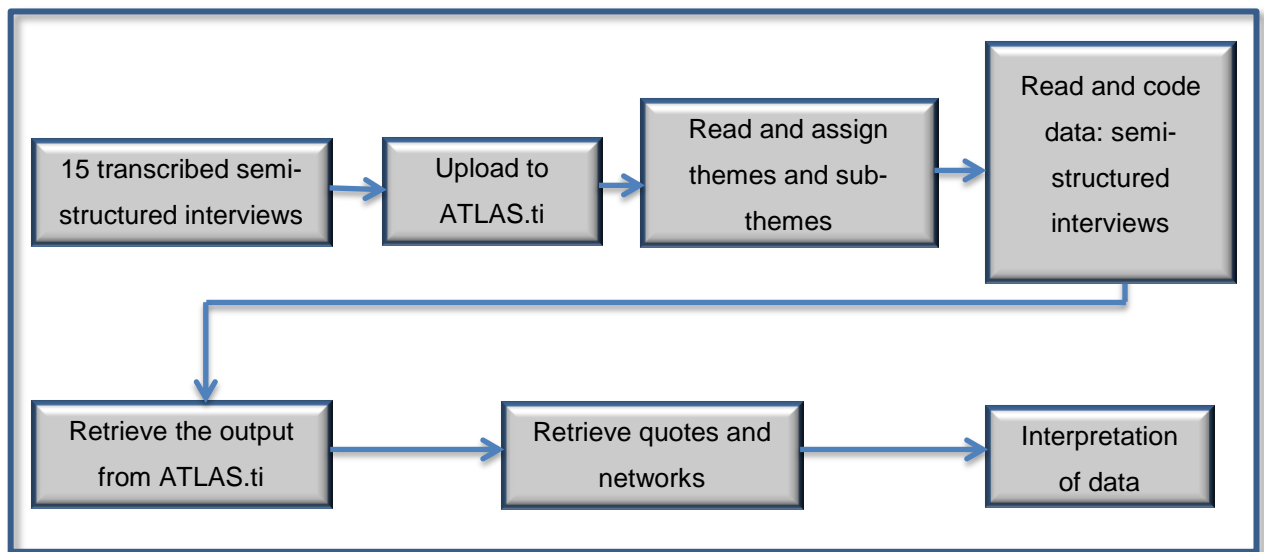
A semi-structured interview schedule was used in conducting the interviews. The central research question was: *What is the most adequate tool for measuring integrated internal communication in the Unisa Library?*

This chapter addressed the following research sub-questions:

- 6.3.1 RQ1: What methods for measuring integrated internal communication exist in the literature?
- 6.3.2 RQ2: What constructs contribute to integrated internal communication based on existing perspectives?
- 6.3.3 RQ3: What communication systems are employees exposed to in the organisation?
- 6.3.4 RQ4: What are the emerging trends/latest developments in the field of organisational communication that should be added to the new measuring tool?
- 6.3.5 RQ5: What does empirical research/existing literature provide in terms of the measurement of integrated internal communication?

## **6.4 Overview of data analysis**

As mentioned earlier, ATLAS.ti software for qualitative data analysis was used to analyse data and the steps are displayed in Figure 6.1.



**Figure 6.1: Overview of data analysis (Adapted from Wildschut 2014:13)**

## 6.5 Analysis of central themes and sub-themes

A thematic approach, which involved the analysis of interview transcripts, was used (Burnard *et al* 2008) and data were categorised into themes and sub-themes (Creswell 2015; Maxwell 2013). *Verbatim* quotes were also identified to emphasise areas of concern in this study (Burnard *et al* 2008). The six main themes and sub-themes are presented in Table 6.1.

**Table 6.1: Themes and sub-themes**

Theme	Sub-theme
<b>Availability of an internal communication measurement instrument</b>	Methods used to measure integrated internal communication
	Reasons for not measuring integrated internal communication
	Importance of measuring integrated internal communication
<b>Communication audit constructs</b>	Identification of constructs for measuring integrated internal communication



Theme	Sub-theme
<b>Internal communication systems</b>	Communication channels that are used in the Library
	Communication channels preferred
	Communication channels used to communicate with subordinates
	Communication channels used for interaction with other units
	Structures that one interacts with
<b>Exploring latest developments or emerging trends in the field of organisational communication</b>	Transformation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding of the concept transformation</li> <li>• Transformation experiences in the Library</li> <li>• The Library Transformation Policy</li> </ul>
	Employment equity (EE) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding of the concept Employment Equity</li> <li>• Issues addressed by the employment equity plan</li> </ul>
	Black economic empowerment (BEE) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding of the concept black economic empowerment</li> <li>• Initiatives for recognition of BEE in the Library</li> </ul>
	Changes in information communication technology (ICT)/technological developments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information communication technology systems accessed/ used</li> <li>• Information communication technology systems preferred</li> <li>• Changes in information communication technology systems</li> <li>• Contribution of information communication technology systems to the integrated internal communication system</li> </ul>
	Changes in government action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness of changes in government action</li> </ul>

Theme	Sub-theme
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribution of changes in government action to the integrated internal communication systems of the Library</li> <li>• The process of communicating laws to employees</li> </ul>
	<p>Customised services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature of requests for customised services</li> <li>• Response to requests for customised services</li> <li>• Contribution of customised services to the integrated internal communication systems of the Library</li> </ul>
	<p>Telecommuting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding the concept telecommuting</li> <li>• Contribution of telecommuting to the integrated internal communication system of the Library</li> </ul>
<b>The multicultural perspective</b>	<p>Values of the Library</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set values of the Library</li> <li>• Compliance with the Library values</li> <li>• Contribution of the Library values to the integrated internal communication system</li> </ul>
	<p>Different cultures of individual employees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural differences of individual employees</li> <li>• Contribution of cultural differences to the integrated internal communication system</li> <li>• Shared culture for Library employees</li> </ul>
	<p>Diversity of employees</p>
	<p>Ethical conduct and morals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribution of employee attitude to the integrated internal communication system</li> </ul>
<b>General issues</b>	<p>Proposed changes to improve the integrated internal communication system</p>

(Source: Author's fieldwork)

### **6.5.1 Availability of an internal communication measurement instrument**

The first research question explored the methods used to measure the integrated internal communication (IIC) of the Unisa Library. The following research question was asked: RQ1: *What methods for measuring integrated internal communication exist in the literature?*

The following follow-up questions were also asked:

- *Do you measure your internal communication in the Library?*
- *If so, which method do you use?*
- *If not, what are the reasons for not measuring your internal communication?*

The three sub-themes were: methods used to measure IIC; reasons for not measuring IIC; and the importance of measuring IIC.

Figure 6.2 shows the diagrammatic presentation of the sub-themes on the availability of an internal communication measurement instrument.



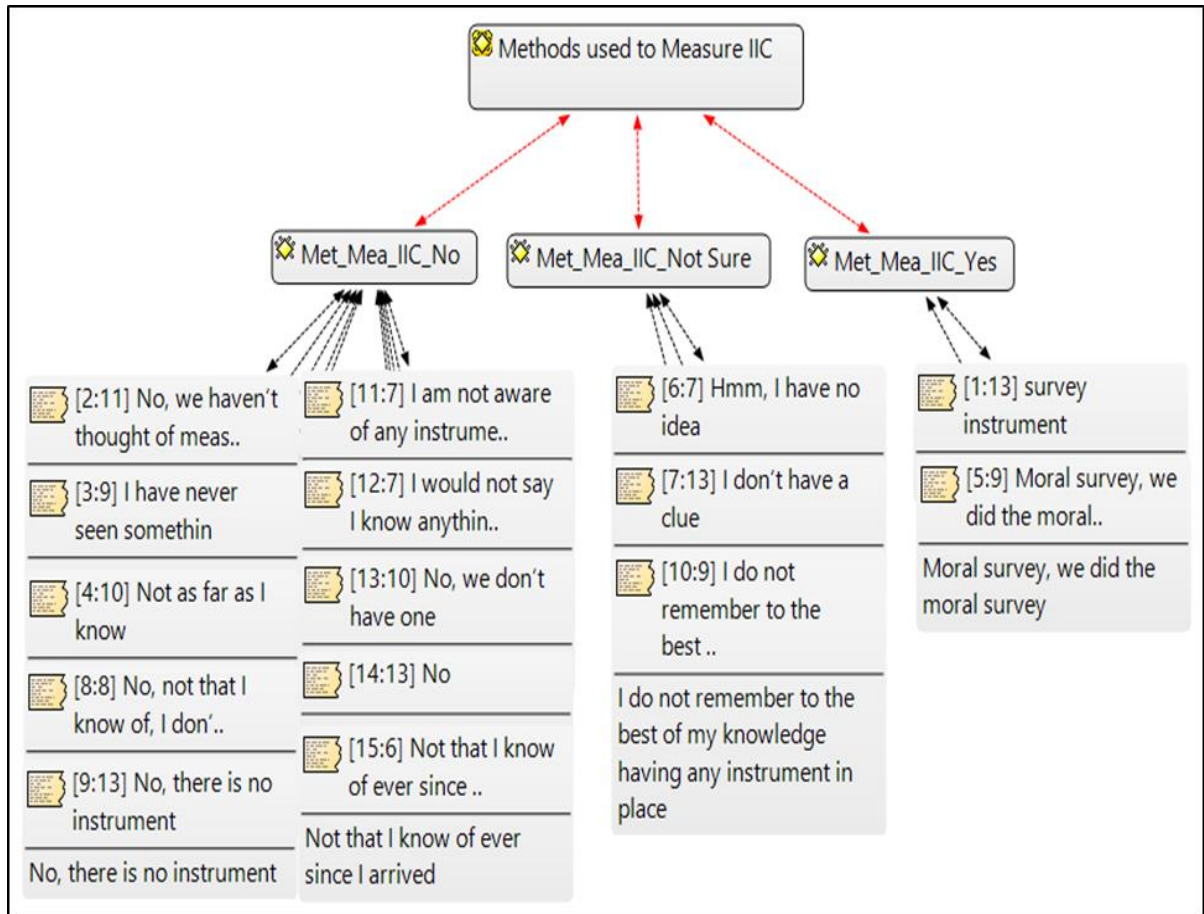
**Figure 6.2: Sub-themes on the availability of an internal communication measurement instrument (Source: Author's fieldwork)**

The thematic analysis of the three sub-themes are discussed in the following subsections.

#### **6.5.1.1 Methods used to measure IIC**

The purpose of this sub-theme was to establish if the Unisa Library measures IIC, and if so, the method/s used. All the participants indicated that there was no tool for measuring IIC in the Library.

Figure 6.3 shows the diagrammatic presentation of responses from the 15 participants on the methods used to measure IIC. Three codes were used: Methods used to Measure IIC [Met\_Mea\_IC: No; Not Sure; Yes].



**Figure 6.3: Methods used to Measure IIC (Source: Generated by the author using ATLAS.ti)**

Figure 6.4 emphasises the responses from participants by means of Word Clouding generated from ATLAS.ti. According to Sellars, Sherrod and Chappel-Aiken (2018), Word Clouds is an emerging technology for visually presenting qualitative text data in an image or picture format to communicate data results or findings by spotting word frequencies based on font size and color. Words that appear most frequently are displayed in large and bold font and those mentioned less frequently are displayed in small font or will not be included at all. The Word Clouds technology analyse text data and provides meaningful interpretations by revealing patterns of key words and trends in responses. By allowing viewers of a visual presentation to identify relationships and meanings, Word Clouds technology was regarded as best suited for exploratory qualitative analysis.



Although two of the participants indicated that the Library was not considering to measure IIC, they could not provide the reasons why. One participant said that, in the past, the Library tried to measure communication with clients. The Library wanted to buy the interactive voice system, but the initiative never materialised and the project failed. Another participant said that the Library was in the process of acquiring the research tool called LibQUAL, which is an American tool used by libraries as information centres, to investigate library issues. Paying for that tool was slightly cumbersome and the process had not been finalised.

The majority of participants were of the opinion that there was no apparent reason for not measuring IIC. However, attempts made to acquire different systems and tools served as an indication that the Library might be willing to measure IIC.

#### **6.5.1.3 The importance of measuring IIC**

The participants were asked to indicate their opinions on the importance of measuring IIC in the Library, should a measurement tool be introduced. Seven of the participants agreed that it would be useful to measure IIC. Two of the participants indicated that measuring IIC could assist the Library managers in assessing the usefulness of communication.

One of the participants mentioned that, as they are in the client service environment, there was a need for an IIC measurement tool, which would assist the Library managers to communicate actively with their subordinates. The participant further indicated that managers were faced with challenges, where colleagues felt that they hardly communicate with them and that this affected their leadership.

Another participant indicated that communication was key in the Library and that it was important to measure it, so that one could check and test whether what one was doing is acceptable. One participant also mentioned that it would assist in measuring the level of communication and would give some indication as to how to communicate; what the issues were; the way they communicated; and maybe which would be the preferred means of communication or somehow tell them what they need to do better.

One participant said that there was currently only communication up and down across levels in the Library in different ways. One of the participants also supported the fact that measuring IIC would assist in improving service delivery, since management could always go back to the results to use them to improve their service. Measuring IIC would also add value to the communication system of the Library through the implementation of the results.

Lastly, one of the participants indicated the need to measure information and tacit knowledge. The participant indicated that tacit knowledge should be put in writing, so that it could be converted into explicit knowledge that could be stored for future needs. However, the challenge was that employees retired from the Library without sharing the knowledge gained through years of experience, which might have assisted new employees in their careers. Hartwich, Alexaki and Baptista (2007) refer to tacit knowledge as personal knowledge that people carry in their minds that is difficult to access and to extract.

Emanating from the foregoing participants' opinions, it could be deduced that measuring IIC may result in the achievement of the following objectives:

- Measure the success of communication with subordinates;
- Assess tacit knowledge and information sharing;
- Serve as a means of checking and testing if the existing communication is desired;

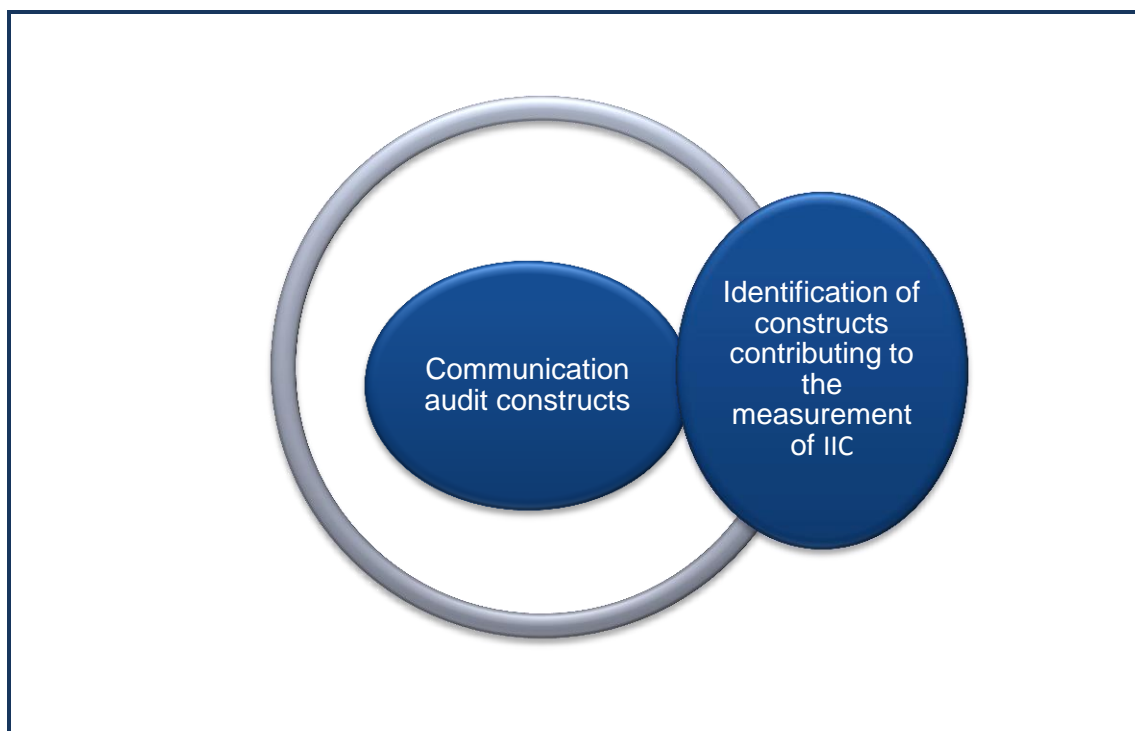


- Provide guidance on how to communicate; the communication issues; the preferred communication media; and the desired changes in the communication of the Library; and
- Communication evaluation results could be used by management to improve the communication system of the Library and enhance service delivery.

### **6.5.2 Communication audit constructs**

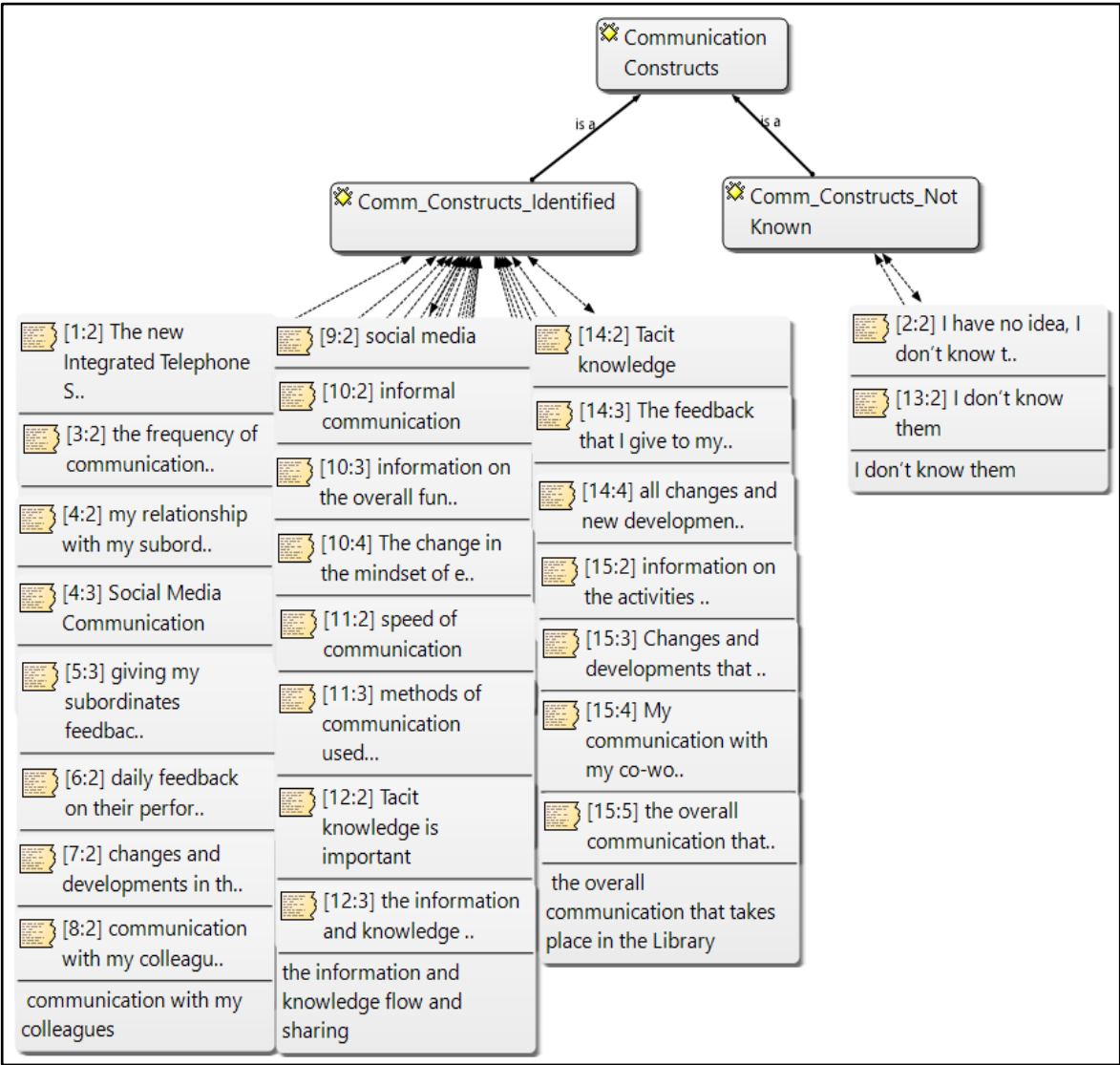
The second research question was to identify constructs that can be used to measure the IIC at the Unisa Library. The following research question was asked: RQ2: *What constructs contribute to the measurement of IIC based on existing perspectives?*

As displayed in Figure 6.5, there was only one theme with one sub-theme.



**Figure 6.5: Sub-themes on communication audit constructs (Source: Author's fieldwork)**

The majority of the participants did not understand the meaning of communication audit constructs; hence they requested for clarity and/or examples of such constructs. All the participants made their remarks on the identification of constructs that contribute to IIC. Two codes were used: Communication Constructs [Comm\_Constructs: Identified; Not Known]. Figure 6.6 depicts the responses from the fifteen (15) participants.



**Figure 6.6: Identification of constructs for measuring IIC (Source: Generated by the author using ATLAS.ti)**

The participants' responses were categorised into the following major constructs, as informed by the literature on communication dimensions or

factors: relational, informational, relational information, communication channels and changes and developments.

The proposed constructs will inform the development of the tool that will be developed to measure the IIC in the Library.

### **6.5.3 Internal communication systems**

The third research question was to explore the internal communication systems used in the Library and the following question was asked: RQ3: *What communication systems are employees exposed to in the organisation?* The following follow-up questions were also asked:

- *What communication channels are used in the Library?*
- *Which internal communication channels do you prefer?*
- *How would you describe your communication with your subordinates?*
- *Does your work require interaction with members of other units within the Library and, if so, what communication channels do you use?*

The five sub-themes that were created are displayed in Figure 6.7.



**Figure 6.7: Sub-themes on internal communication systems used in the Library**  
**(Source: Author's fieldwork)**

The response to the sub-themes will be articulated in the following sub-sections.

#### **6.5.3.1 Communication channels used in the Library**

The communication channels that were identified by the majority of participants are presented in Figure 6.8. One code was used: Communication Channels Used in the Library [Comm\_Chann\_Used\_Library].

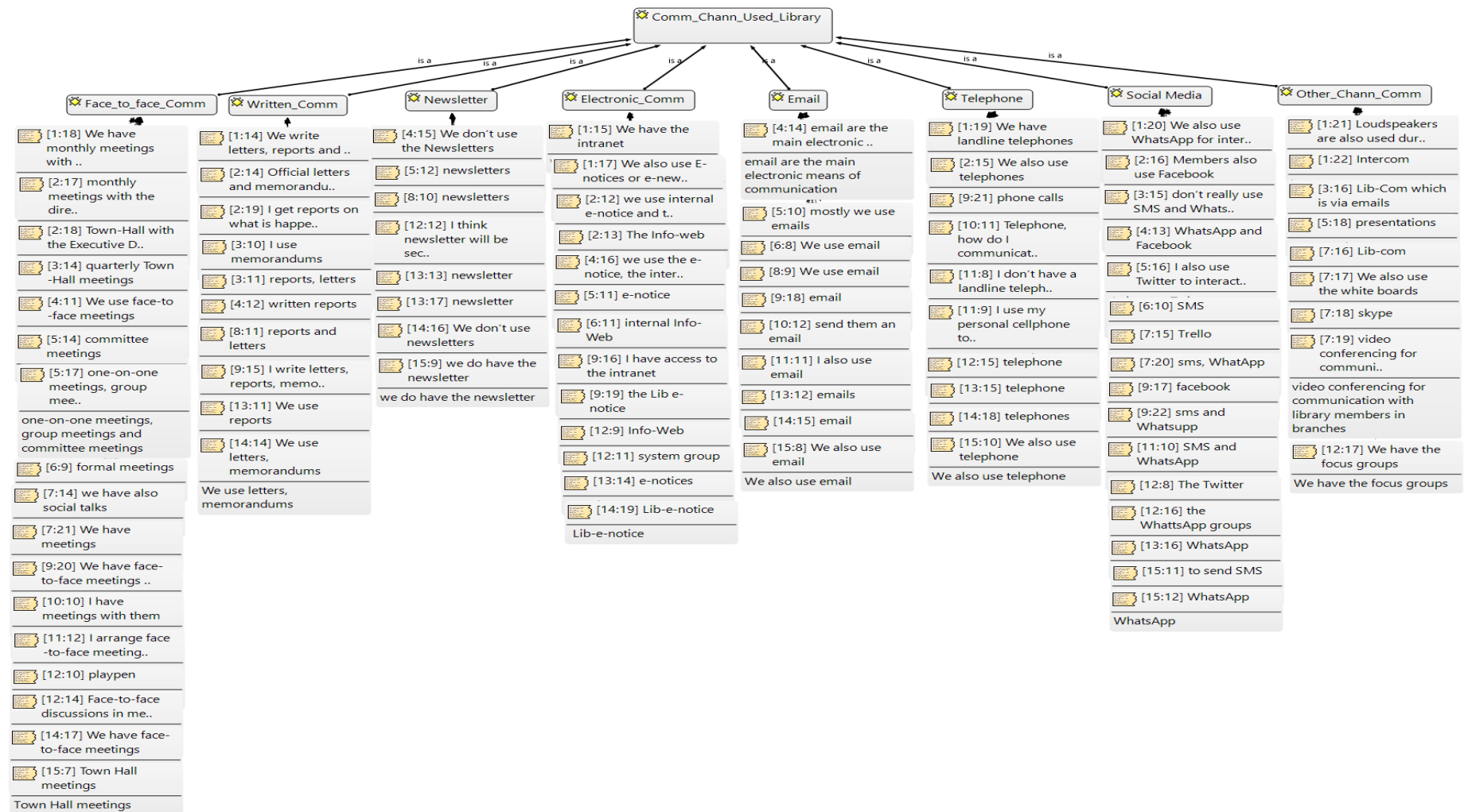


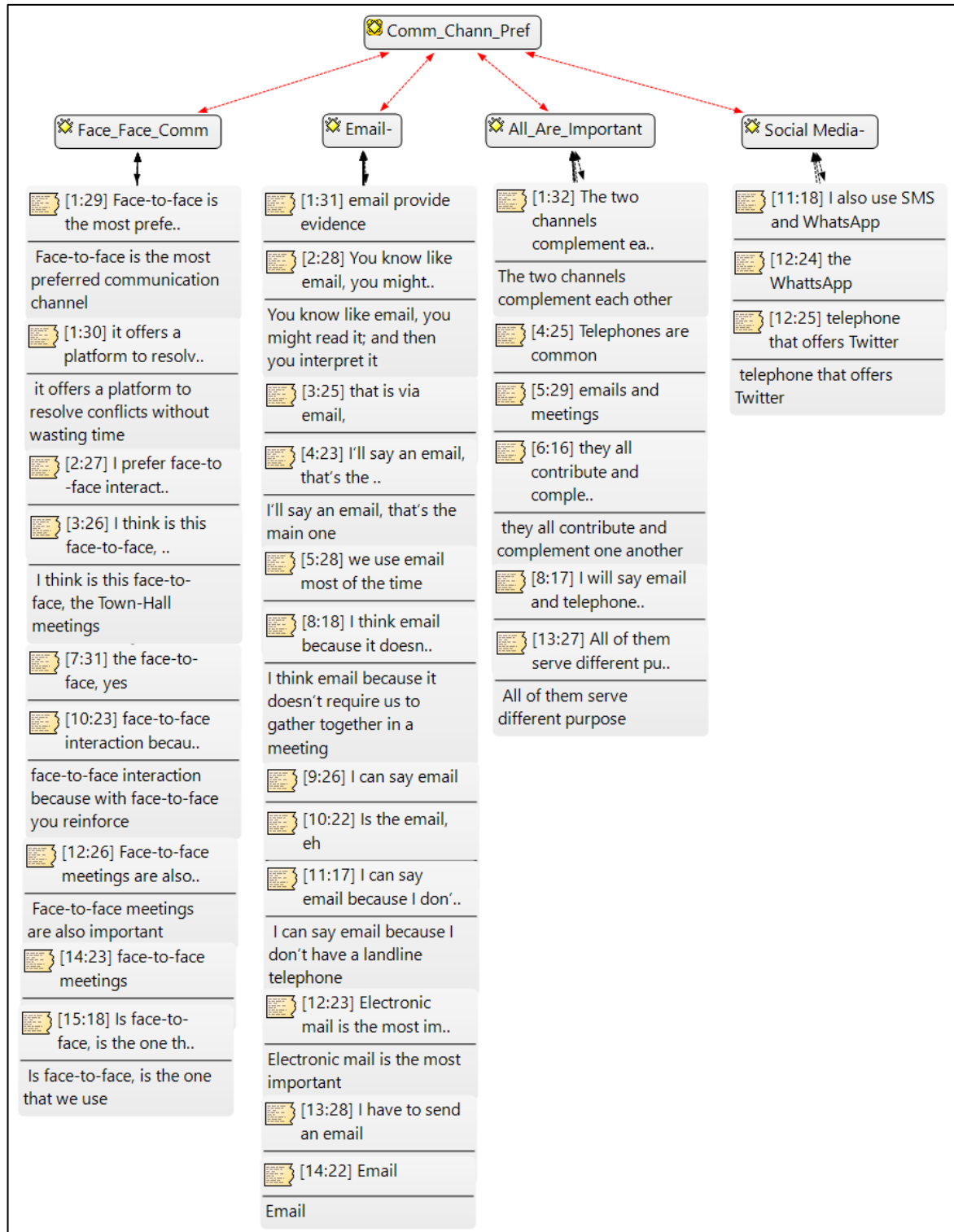
Figure 6.8: Communication channels used in the Library (Source: Generated by the author using ATLAS.ti)

It is evident from the channels presented in the foregoing network that the Library uses a number of communication channels to facilitate the flow of communication.

#### **6.5.3.2 Communication channels preferred**

The participants were asked to identify the communication channels that they preferred. Four codes were used: Face-to-Face communication [Face\_Face-Comm]; Email; All channels are important [All\_Are\_Important] and Social Media.

Responses are presented in Figure 6.9.



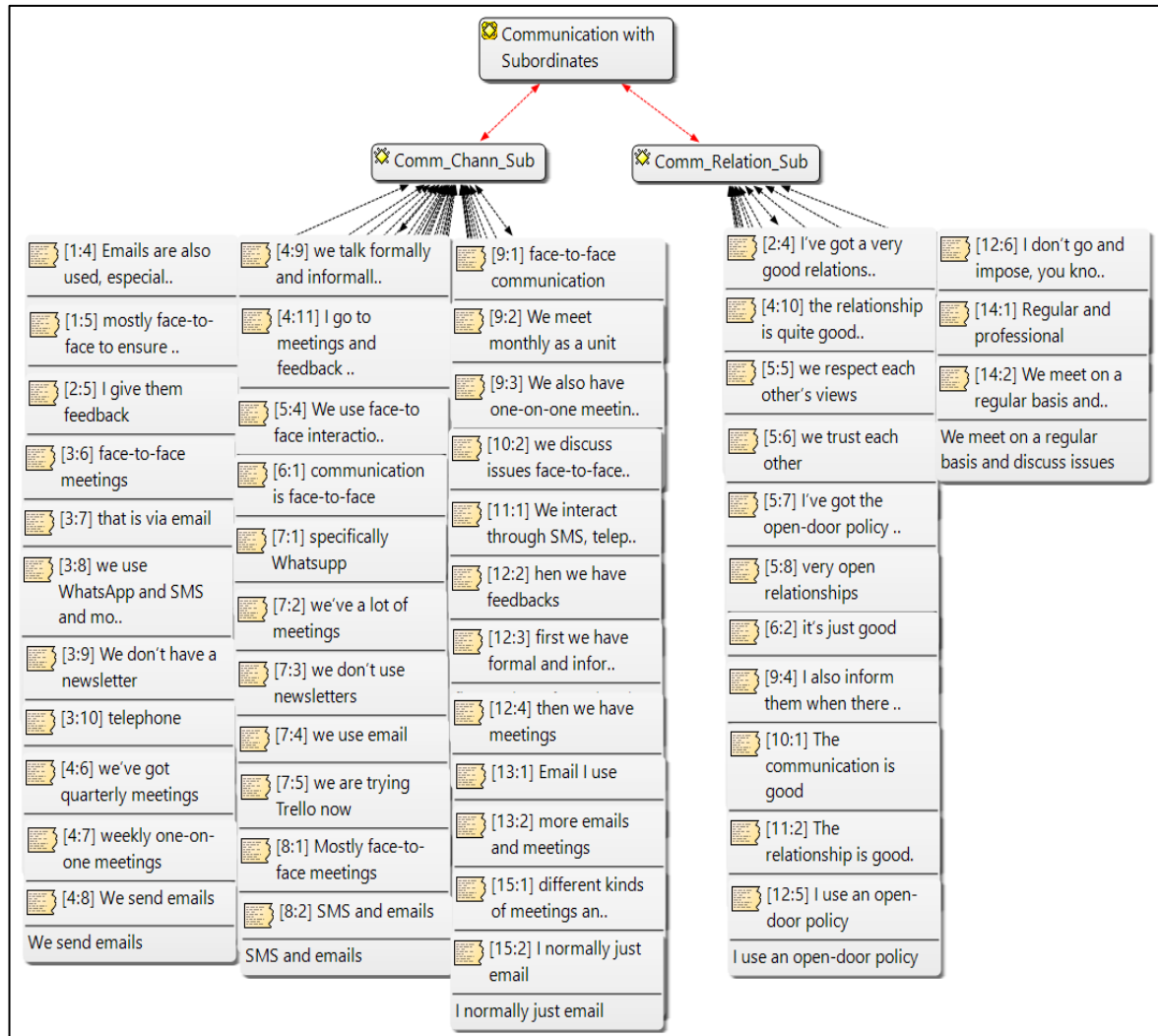
**Figure 6.9: Communication channels preferred (Source: Generated by the author using ATLAS.ti)**

Figure 6.9 indicates email as the most preferred channel, because it is readily available. Email provides evidence and can be used to address urgent matters without any waste of time. Face-to-face is identified as the second best channel, which is a good platform for sharing information; clarifying matters during misunderstandings; providing feedback; and resolving conflicts without wasting time, especially during disputes. The two channels complement each other: participants indicated that, when face-to-face meetings are held, written minutes distributed through emails may serve as evidence of the discussion that can be used during disputes and to resolve conflicts.

#### **6.5.3.3 Communication channels used to communicate with subordinates**

The participants were asked to describe the communication channels that they used to communicate with subordinates and their responses are displayed in Figure 6.10. Two codes were used: Communication Channels used to communicate with Subordinates [Comm\_Chann\_Sub] and Communication Relationships with Subordinates [Comm\_Relation\_Sub].





**Figure 6.10: Communication channels used to communicate with subordinates**  
**(Source: Generated by the author using ATLAS.ti)**

In terms of communication channels used to communicate with subordinates, the majority of participants identified face-to-face communication as the best method for information sharing and for clarifying and reinforcing matters. Face-to-face meetings were identified as the most active channel, followed by emails, which were used mostly for feedback. Emails were criticised for providing information overload. Lastly, participants also indicated that they maintained good communication relationships with their subordinates and applied an open-door policy to encourage access.

#### **6.5.3.4      *Communication channels used for interaction with other units***

The participants were asked to identify the communication channels that they used for interaction with other units. The identified channels are presented in Table 6.2.

**Table 6.2: Communication channels used for interaction with other units**

<b>Codes</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Emails	12
Face-to-face communications	7
Telephone conversations	4
Forum meetings	2
Group discussions	1
Management committee	1
Process owner's forums (POF) meetings	1
Skype	1
Talks	1
Video conferencing	1
White boards	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>

**(Source: Author's fieldwork)**

Participants, responses indicated that most units used face-to-face, email and the telephone to discuss overlapping or crosscutting activities. Meetings were identified as being quick in facilitating discussions aimed at clarifying issues and finding solutions to problems. The process owner's forums (POF) meetings were identified as effective in discussing all process related matters.

Emails were used for interaction on matters of mutual interest and telephone conversations were mainly used to complement the email and face-to-face interactions.

#### **6.5.3.5 Structures that one interacts with**

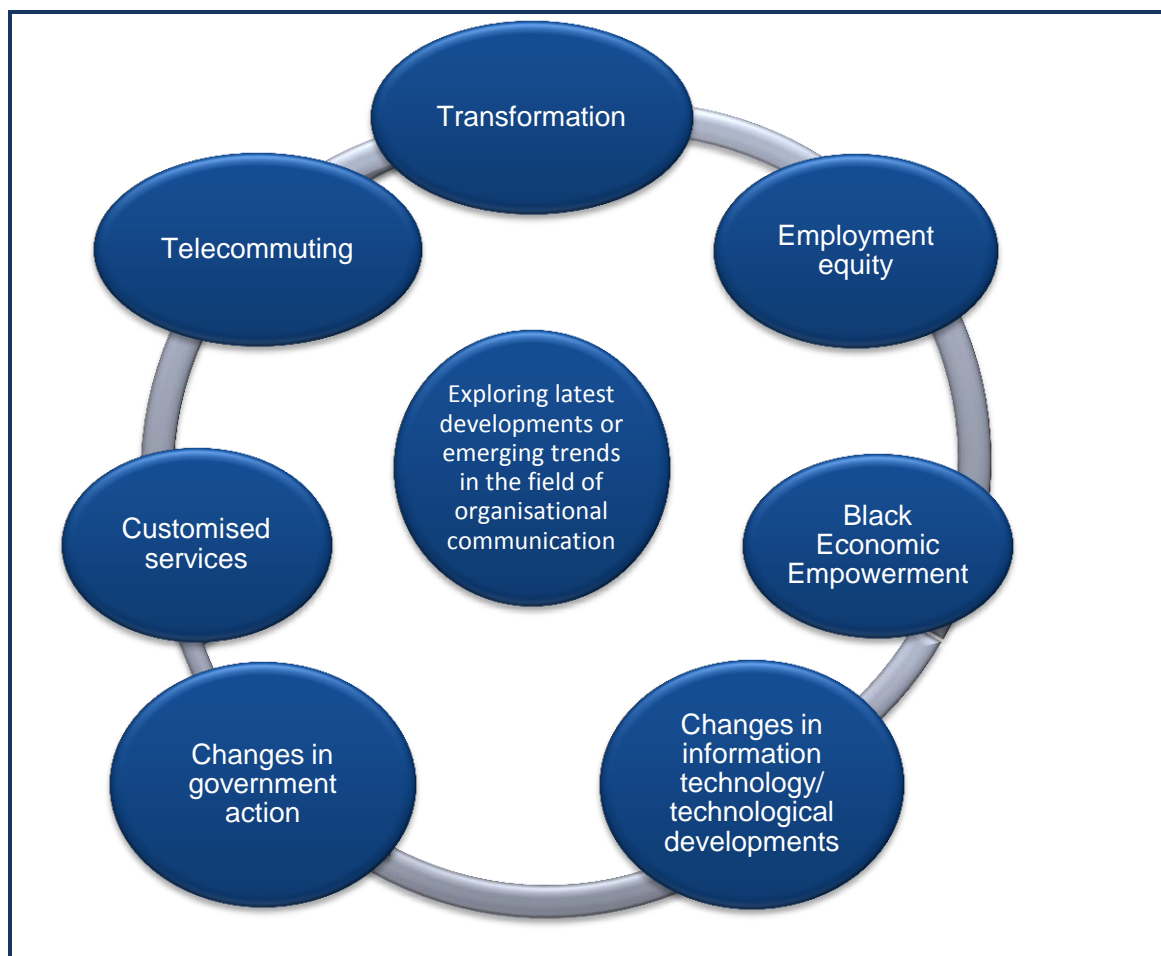
The participants were asked to indicate the structures with which they interacted. They identified all Library directorates; the process owner's forum (POF) meetings; the Library Executive Team (LET) meetings, which consisted of directors and executive directors and the Library Management Team (LMT), where the managers, directors and deputy directors meet on a monthly basis and review the Library operational plan and targets.

Channels used to interact with other structures included email and the intercom, which is a library communication (Lib-com) system. Participants further indicated that the Library structures were hierarchical with numerous reporting lines preventing the flow of information. One participant said that, "Information on what is discussed is not filtered, the LET and POF; so there is a disconnect there. So, they discuss things there and decide things there, but it is not always filtered through and then the lower levels don't know what has been decided upon".

#### **6.5.4 Exploring latest developments or emerging trends in the field of organisational communication**

The fourth research question involved the latest developments or emerging trends in the field of organisational communication. The following research question was asked: RQ4: *What are the emerging trends/latest developments in the field of organisational communication which should be added to the new measuring tool?* The constructs explored were: transformation, employment equity (EE), black economic empowerment (BEE), changes in information communication technology/technological developments, changes in government action, customised services and telecommuting.

The diagrammatic presentation of the sub-themes on the latest developments in the field of organisational communication are shown in Figure 6.11.



**Figure 6.11: Sub-themes on the latest developments in the field of organisational communication (Source: Author's fieldwork)**

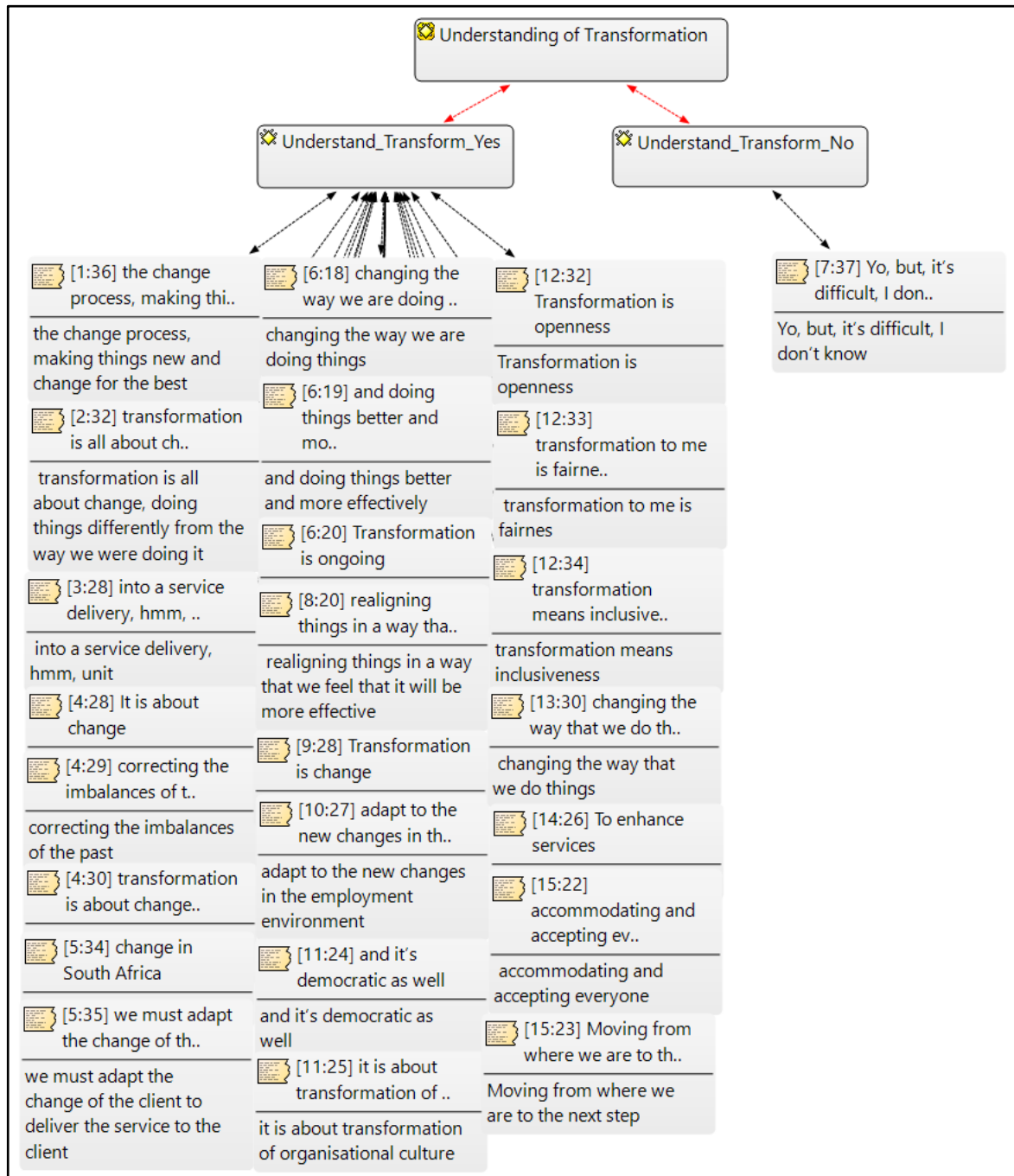
#### **6.5.4.1 Transformation**

The participants were asked to indicate their understanding of the concept of transformation and what they had experienced in the Library. Three sub-themes were explored: understanding the concept of transformation; transformation experiences in the Library; and the Library transformation policy.

##### ***6.5.4.1.1 Understanding of the concept of transformation***

In terms of their understanding of the concept of transformation, all participants gave their views as displayed in Figure 6.12. Two codes were used:

Understanding of transformation: [Understand\_Transform\_Yes; Understand\_Transform\_No].



**Figure 6.12: Exploring the latest developments or emerging trends in the field of organisational communication: Transformation (Source: Generated by the author using ATLAS.ti)**

In terms of understanding the concept of transformation, participants described transformation as an ongoing change process that involved the change in systems and processes and the development of strategies to ensure that people adapt to the new changes in the employment environment. Transformation was about African Renaissance and the accession of African identity, which was primarily about how one values oneself as a person first and foremost and as an African; the pride that one have in one's identity; and also how that person interacted with others. The library laws must reflect the population of the country. The transformation was also associated with openness, fairness and having an element of justice.

In summary, the interviewees defined transformation as an ongoing change process that involved reworking and realigning things to the benefit of the organisation and doing things differently, better and more effectively. Transformation also involved changes in organisational culture and values, moving away from the old rigid organisational structure; adapting to the changing needs of the client; and the employment of young professionals to replace retiring employees. Change had to be reflected in the workplace and includes change management.

#### ***6.5.4.1.2 Transformation experiences at the Library***

The participants were asked to reflect on their experiences of transformation in the Library. They singled out the Transformation Charter for libraries as the roadmap in the implementation process. One participant was quoted saying that "We have the Library Transformation Charter that the Library was very much involved in. It was communicated to all and everyone knew about it. The transformation charter was launched and widely published and there was a plan for improvements".

Another participant said that, "In the Library, we have transformed quite a lot, taking the traditional Library from what it used to be in the beginning, even the services that we offer have transformed. It is no longer the traditional Library

where they have to rely on books. They use electronic systems where they can be accessible anywhere and anytime” and “the Library environment has been transformed, in the true sense”.

Participants further indicated that employees had transformed in terms of racial composition. One participant said: “The Unisa Library has adopted the concept of transformation and there is a change from what was done in the nineties, as compared to the current situation”.

Projects introduced as a result of transformation included change management and the implementation of the Mvusuludzo Project. The services had been transformed to become more user-centric. One participant indicated that “the Library did change, if one look in terms of the structure”.

#### ***6.5.4.1.3 The Library Transformation Policy***

The participants were asked if they were aware of the Library Transformation Policy. Thirteen participants were aware and two participants were not aware of the transformation policy. However, they were guided by the transformation imperatives of the University, as they do not work in isolation. One participant was quoted as follows: “There is a transformation agenda policy which regulates the library sector as a whole, not only the higher education institutions, it’s more to do with, if you check online, there is the transformation agenda for the libraries, and also the framework”.

In summary, the foregoing discussion on transformation provided the study with insight into employees’ understanding of the concept of transformation and their experiences within the context of transformation. The concept provided guidance in terms of managing change that might take place in the Library. The concept contributed to the measurement tool that would be used to evaluate the integrated internal communication of the Unisa Library. However, transformation cannot be considered a standalone construct in this study, because it is a

temporary intervention and an ongoing process aimed at the adaptation and the realignment of the *status quo* for the achievement of the pre-determined future.

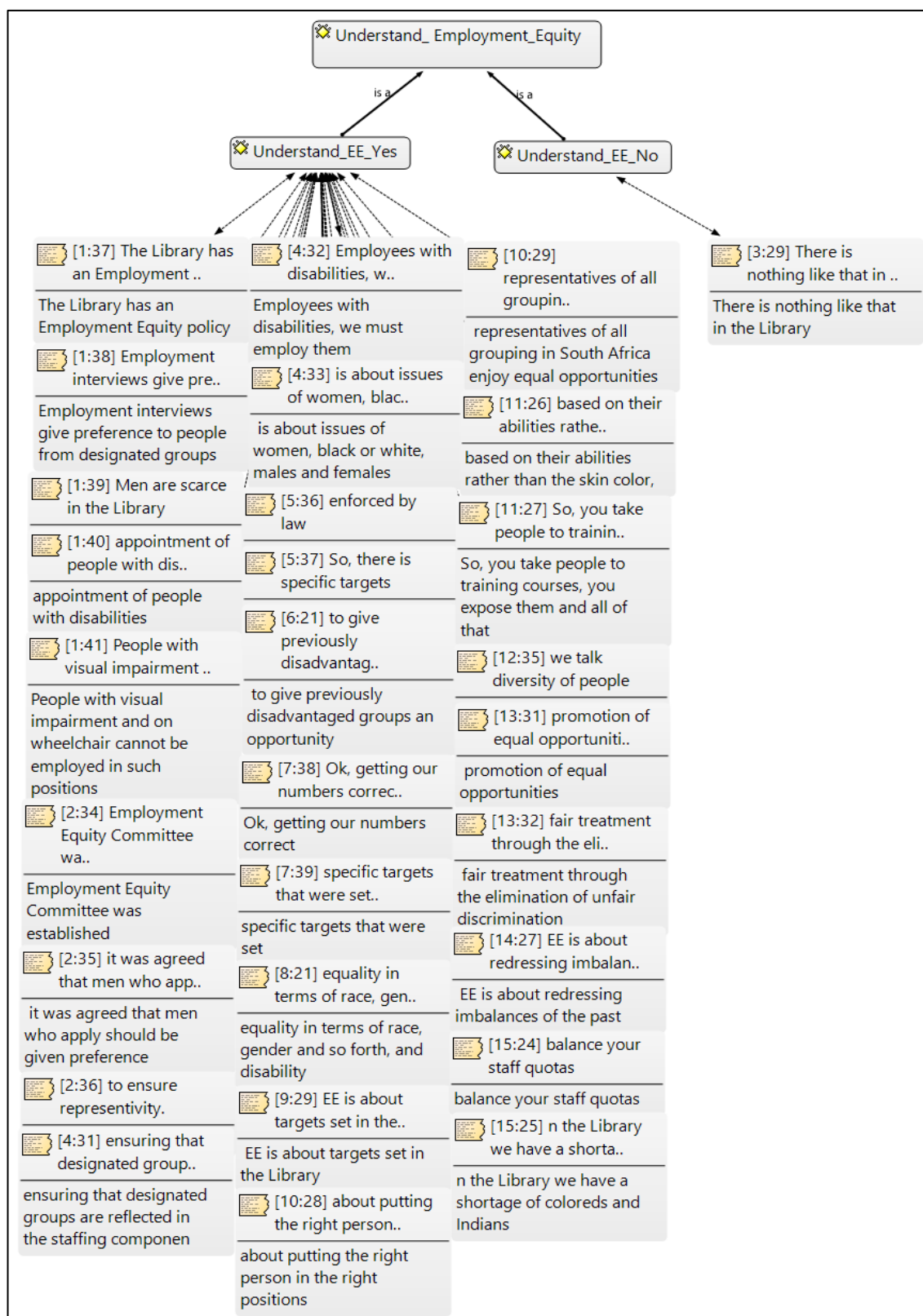
#### **6.5.4.2     *Employment equity***

The participants were asked to describe the concept of employment equity (EE); whether there was an employment equity plan for the Library; what the plan addressed, including the reasons for the absence of the plan if it did not exist. Two sub-themes were explored: understanding the concept of employment equity and issues addressed by the employment equity plan.

##### **6.5.4.2.1     *Understanding of the concept employment equity***

Participants described the concept of employment equity as displayed in Figure 6.13. Two codes were used: Understanding Employment Equity [Understand\_EE\_Yes; Understand\_EE\_No].





**Figure 6.13: Exploring the latest developments or emerging trends in the field of organisational communication: Employment Equity (Source: Generated by the author using ATLAS.ti)**

The participants indicated the concept of employment equity as being about giving preference to designated groups – such as women and people with disabilities – in the provision of opportunities to allow them to participate in certain jobs. The concept addressed issues of equality; the elimination of unfair discrimination; fair treatment; and the achievement of specific targets in terms of gender, race, disability, etc. Only one participant indicated that EE was not recognised in the Library.

One participant argued that EE should consider people based on abilities rather than the skin colour; tolerating or accepting people who are living with disabilities; EE is about targets set in the Library; redressing imbalances of the past; looking at underrepresented people in terms of current employment of staff in the Library. Another participant indicated that the EE Committee decided that males who apply for positions should be given preference to ensure representivity, as males are underrepresented in the Library.

#### ***6.5.4.2.2 Issues addressed by the employment equity plan***

The participants were asked to indicate if there was an EE plan for the Library, and if so, to indicate issues being addressed by the plan.

The following responses were obtained: six of the participants indicated that the Library did have an EE plan that addressed targets that needed to be achieved by all units. During the appointment of Library employees, the Unisa EE representatives advise structures to identify EE targets to be achieved in terms of gender equality and racial composition. However, problems were experienced in achieving the set targets, because they found it difficult to get the desired people from the designated groups.

One participant said: “We mainly try and balance our staff quotas. For instance, in the Library, we have a shortage of coloureds and Indians. We always have to take that into account when you are recruiting”. Another participant said: “Gaps

were created due to the lack of males. The profession has been stigmatised as the women's profession and the majority of qualifications are obtained by women. Fewer males are employed in the Library. Headhunting is recommended if the EE target is not found".

In terms of the communication of EE targets to employees, participants indicated that the EE plan was normally communicated through the Intranet and those who were involved in the Employment Equity Committee were expected to give feedback to their respective constituencies. One participant indicated the following: "Yes, an Employment Equity Committee was established to address issues of employment equity in the Library, especially the achievement of targets and future projections based on retirements. It addresses issues of race: we have blacks, whites, Indians, coloureds; it addresses diversity at the Library."

One participant expressed the lack of communication of EE targets, saying, "EE Plan and, hmm, how many people do you have, blacks, females, black males, Indians, Coloureds, white females, white males and how many people, in which division, and what are the targets set for each category. So, EE targets of the Library are not known to me. It is not communicated to my level".

In terms of achievement of EE targets, the Library units must show how they have improved over time; how many people they have appointed of colour: the number of coloureds, whites and blacks. One participant indicated that the EE targets were not met. Participants were quoted saying, "Employment interviews give preference to people from designated groups as compared to other people. Men are scarce in the Library. Since 1999, attention was given to the appointment of people with disabilities, but the limitation was on the nature of available jobs in the library. People with visual impairment and on wheelchair cannot be employed in such positions. They need to be accommodated in jobs that cater for their needs".

One participant identified accommodation of people with disabilities as a challenge in the achievement of EE targets, because the Library needed to modify the buildings to include lifts with audio for the blind people.

Most participants viewed EE as an intervention intended to address inequality and the elimination of unfair discrimination in employment in terms of race, gender and the employment of people with disabilities.

The concept of EE provided the study with information on the challenges experienced in addressing the needs of the designated groups and the scarcity of males, coloureds, Indians and people with disabilities in the Library. EE can be considered a standalone construct, as it contributes to the communication needs of individual employees such as the young, old and people with disabilities.

#### **6.5.4.3 Black economic empowerment (BEE)**

The participants were asked to indicate their understanding of the concept of BEE; whether the Library recognised BEE; the initiatives that the Library had introduced to address BEE; and the reasons for the lack of the recognition of BEE, if any. Two sub-themes were generated: understanding the concept of BEE and the initiatives for the recognition of BEE legislation.

##### ***6.5.4.3.1 Understanding of the concept of BEE***

In terms of the understanding of the concept of BEE, four participants indicated that the Library complied with BEE legislation. One of the participants said that BEE was about enterprise and business. Therefore, EE and BEE were one thing, while EE was about employees, BEE was about companies. While EE referred to the ability of people to access job opportunities, BEE was about African people and, in this way, it was a corrective measure. So, both were identified as corrective and social justice measures that corrected the wrongs of the past. Participants further indicated that, in the past, Africans were excluded

from economic, employment and training opportunities and jobs were reserved for specific racial groups.

The participants further indicated that BEE was about economic empowerment, tenders, contracts and exposing blacks and minorities to more opportunities in the economy that had previously not been available to them. BEE was about addressing imbalances of the past; transforming the past to the present; and going into the future. BEE was referred to as an equaliser that made things equal if one looked at all levels – from the executive level, the middle management level or the operations level.

The Unisa procurement policy was clear and encouraged compliance with the national legislation. The Library was playing its role by ensuring that suppliers meet the BEE criteria. The University insisted on compliance and compelled suppliers to be BEE compliant, before they are placed on the database.

One participant expressed the following response: “You know, you know, I have serious reservations about that, BEE personally, eh. You can’t, you can’t just put somebody up there without the necessary qualifications and skills by virtue of his colour. Let’s put competent people there. Competency and skills should be the guiding principles as to who gets appointed. What is the point of putting somebody who cannot deliver”.

The participants agreed that BEE was deliberately intended to create opportunities for black people to participate in the economy broadly; to access capital and skills; and to remove deliberate barriers preventing the achievement of opportunities. Thus, they said it was a matter of state policy, state investment and strategies and, therefore, it was also about a form of state intervention to open those opportunities for black people.

#### ***6.5.4.3.2 Initiatives for recognition of BEE in the Library***

The participants were asked to identify BEE initiatives implemented in the Library in compliance with the BEE legislation. Six of the participants indicated that skills development was prioritised, saying, “There is skills development, was conducted by the training division, hmm, training is done through HRD training. So, we participate in HRD training and external training”; “I will say is about capacitating Library staff to be able to meet certain requirements. For example, it is about personal development, staff development in terms of training, workshops and attending conferences, publishing journals”; “Yes, I can say we have programs because Unisa give each and every department funds for training, to develop staff. We study and get developed” and “Obviously, when you come to employment equity, that’s where we as managers come up to select people from our own environment and obviously in terms of skilling, we have to skill them when we see that there is a gap”. Therefore, skills development was recognised as an empowerment initiative intended to equip employees with the necessary skills to participate in BEE initiatives.

Six of the participants identified the talent management programme as bridging the skills gap. The programme targeted employees who could be empowered or developed, either through learnership, workshops, mentoring and coaching. A specific criterion was used to identify employees who can be developed in specific areas. Talent management programmes were linked to the performance of employees.

Two of the participants indicated that they were not aware of any BEE initiatives.

In summary: participants indicated that the BEE programme was launched to create opportunities for black people to participate in the economy in addressing inequality. It was an intervention intended to empower Africans in South Africa by giving them the opportunities that they did not have in the past. The concept

did not contribute to the measurement tool, as the study does not focus on empowerment of black people in South Africa.

#### **6.5.4.4 Changes in information communication technology/ technological developments**

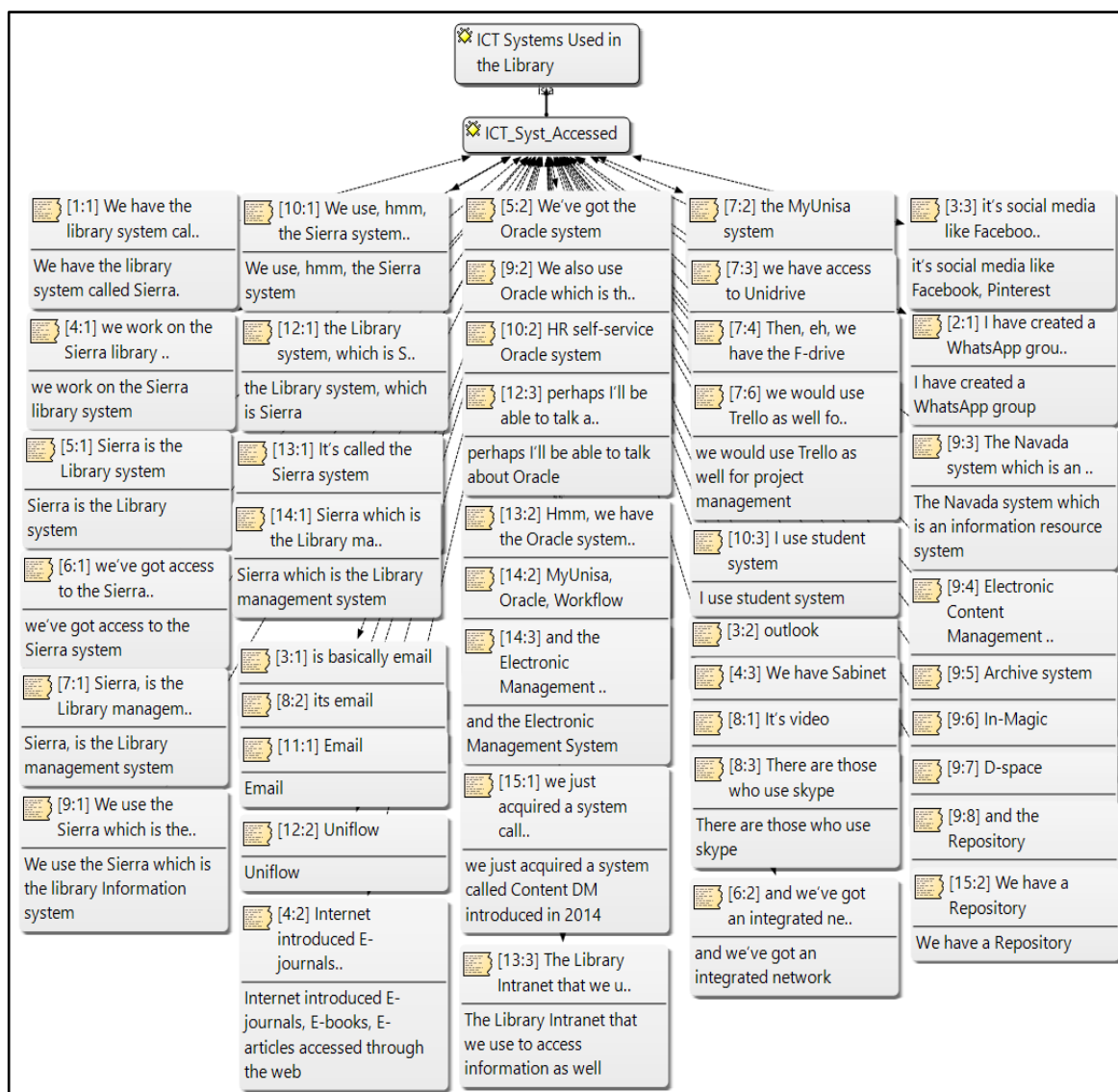
The participants were asked the following questions:

- Does the Library use information communication technology systems and, if so, to which information communication technology systems do they have access?
- Which of the information communication technology systems enhance their communication?
- What changes to information communication technology systems has the Library introduced in the past year and, if not, what do they think is the cause of the absence of information technology in the Library?

The following sub-themes were generated: information technology systems accessed/used; information technology systems preferred; changes in Information technology systems; and the impact of information technology systems for communication.

##### ***6.5.4.4.1 Information communication technology systems accessed/used***

In terms of the information communication technology system accessed, responses are displayed in Figure 6.14. One code was used: Information Communication Technology Systems Accesss: [ICT\_Syst\_Accessed].



**Figure 6.14: Exploring the latest developments or emerging trends in the field of organisational communication: ICT Systems accessed (Source: Generated by the author using ATLAS.ti)**

In terms of the ICT systems accessed, participants identified the Sierra Library System and the Oracle system. They indicated that the Sierra library system was used by a number of sections in the Library; that it was the library information management system and the only system that the Library owned.

The other ICT systems identified were: mobile system, myUnisa, social media, workflow system, Uniflow, archive system, content document management, In-Magic, D-space, databases, digital technology, e-articles, e-books, e-journals,



integrated network, library-up, repository, Sabinet, Skype, student system, Unidrive, RFID and videos. Respondents further indicated that the Unisa Library competed with international libraries in terms of ICT systems.

Participants considered the following communication channels as systems: email, WhatsApp, SMS, Twitter, telephone and fax.

Participants indicated that Content DM was introduced in 2014, in order to digitise all the material in the archives and to make sure that they could be accessed online. The system was also used as a search tool. As part of digitisation, one of the participants indicated that the digital strategy would be developed for the Presidential Library.

One of the participants indicated that employees were exposed to new information communication technology systems from time-to-time and these included: applications, mobile systems, databases and workflow systems. The ICT systems enhanced their relationships. Another participant said that the electronic content management system was used for records management. Participants also used Microsoft, which provided programmes such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Access.

#### ***6.5.4.4.2 Information communication technology systems preferred***

The participants were asked to identify the information communication technology systems that they prefer. Three participants identified email, which is a communication channel; two identified the Oracle system; two identified the Sierra systems, while two indicated that all systems were effective.

One participant said that “There’s nothing that I can say is not working well. So, most of it is effective”. Another participant said, “We use all ICT systems in conjunction. No, no, you can’t say there is the best one because they all complement each other”.

#### ***6.5.4.4.3 Changes in information communication technology systems***

The following changes in information communication technology systems were identified. – Two participants indicated that they were not aware of any changes in ICT systems; the ICT department upgraded the ICT systems; the Library was in the process of acquiring 3D scans to be used for the scanning of objects; and there was a need for the Digital Presentation Software system that would take care of the digital memory of the Unisa as an institution.

Changes suggested included the introduction of video conferencing and webinars.

One participant expressed the following response: “The E-Gain, which is a Library system, was introduced from the UK and it is being piloted”. The participants pointed out that the Navada system was being piloted, but had not yet been implemented. One of the participants pointed out that there was Skype, where one could communicate with a person on Skype, whether they are overseas or not. One participant was quoted as saying, “I think one of the routes that the Library has taken is that everybody who works in the Library should be IT literate. So, you’ll find that even the shelve has a computer. Everybody has access and they know how to use these things”. Therefore, librarians needed to be ICT competent, in order to keep up with the demands of clients. This was supported by a participant who said that “You can have the best tools in the world, but if people don’t use them, then it’s useless. If people don’t use the available systems, they become obsolete”.

#### ***6.5.4.4.4 Contributions of information communication technology systems to the internal communication system***

The participants were asked to indicate the contribution that they thought ICT made on the communication system of the Library. Responses indicated that

the Library had the best ICT systems that enhanced the communication system. Participants were quoted as saying that “I will say, at Unisa we have nearly most of the things that we need. We compare very well with international libraries. I cannot say that there is a lot that we are missing” and “Yes. We rely on our ICT, the main ICT where they have secure networks and what? So, they are the ones who must ensure, because we don’t have our own ICT here in the Library, so the Library is dependent there, to the main ICT. The university ICT, that is the one”.

In summary: there were more advantages than disadvantages: communication is now faster and employees attended ICT-related courses to keep them up-to-date with changes in ICT. However, the Library was dependent on the University ICT and there was a need for a library ICT system. Another participant indicated that, when the system was down, nothing could be done and time was lost.

It can be deduced that the Library is advancing well in terms of ICT systems. Some of the changes needed in ICT systems included the introduction of the 3D scanning; E-Gain; Navada and digital presentation software. The concept of ICT contributes to the communication channels construct that measure integrated internal communication in facilitating the flow of information.

#### **6.5.4.5 Changes in government action**

In terms of changes in government action, the participants were asked if they were aware of any changes in government action/legislation affecting the Library and, if so, what were these changes; in what way did the changes affect the internal communication system of the Library and how were the laws communicated to employees. The sub-themes created were: changes in government action; the contribution of changes in government actions to the internal communication systems; and the communication of laws to employees.

#### 6.5.4.5.1 Awareness of changes in government action

Responses on awareness of changes on government action or legislation are displayed in Figure 6.15. Two codes were used: Legislation and Changes.

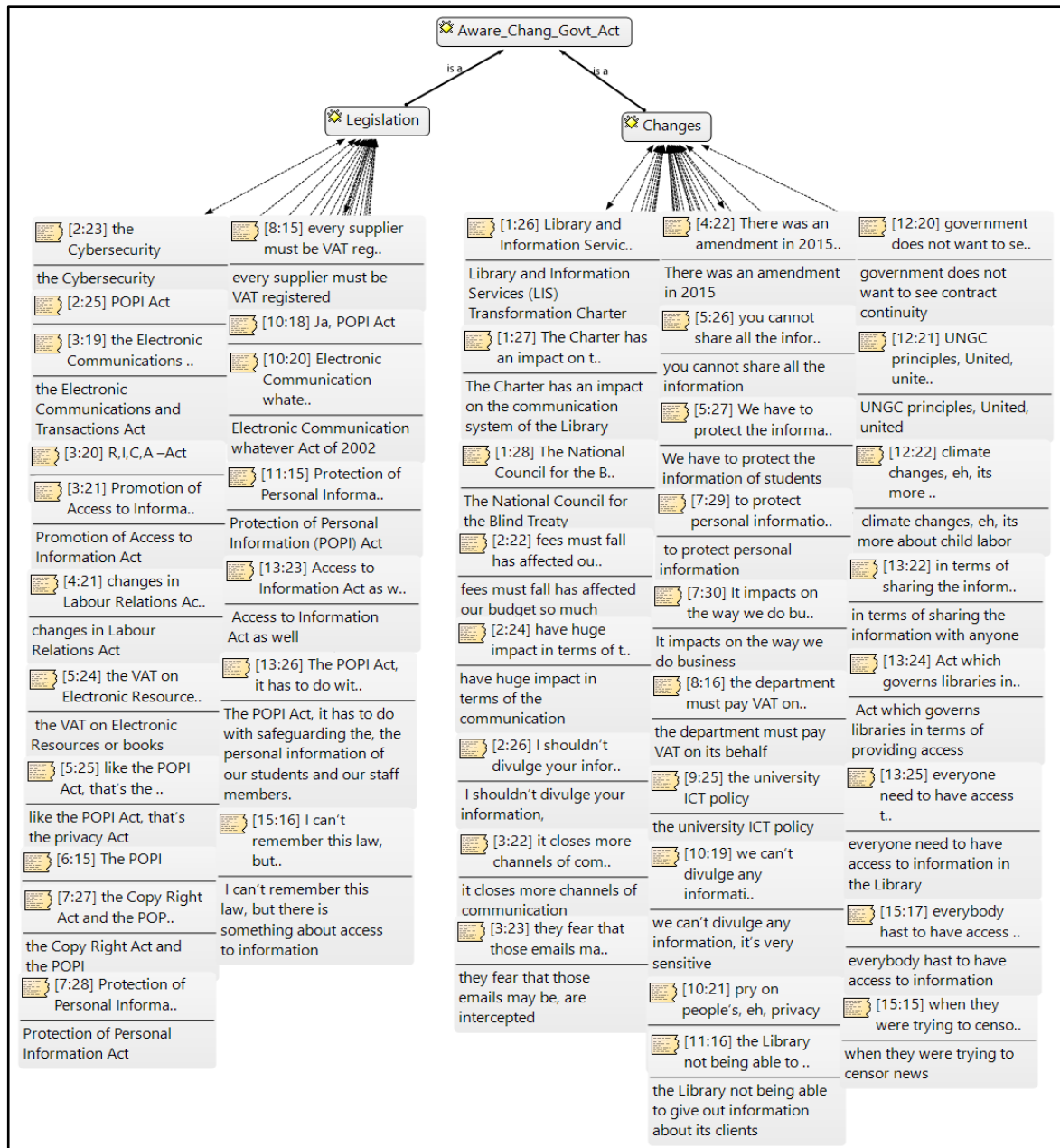


Figure 6.15: Exploring the latest developments or emerging trends in the field of organisational communication: Changes in government action (Source: Generated by the author using ATLAS.ti)

Legislation identified in Figure 6.15 included the Promotion of Access to Information (PoPI) Act, the Copy Right Act, the Regulation on Interception of Electronic and Related Information and Communications Act (RICA Act), Value Added Tax (VAT), the Labour Relations Act (LRA), as amended in 2015, and the Employment Equity (EE) policy. In addition to government legislation, participants indicated that the Library and Information Services (LIS) Transformation Charter was introduced in 2014 to address the needs of different categories of libraries. The National Council for the Blind Treaty was also introduced to the Library, adding more responsibility to the activities of librarians. The Fees-Must-Fall was also mentioned, which involved student protests against the increase in fees in tertiary institutions and which impacted negatively on the budget of the Library and the university at large.

**6.5.4.5.2 *Contribution of changes in government action to the internal communication systems of the Library***

Participants were asked to indicate the contribution made by the changes in government action or legislation to the IIC system of the Library. They indicated that the PoPI Act prevented the sharing of personal information – i.e. the information could not be divulged. The Act also protected/safeguarded personal information of employees and students. In order to ensure that they used information for the sole purpose of providing services to clients in the Library, employees were not allowed to share someone's information, either verbally or written, including information on the Web.

The Copy Right Act protects the copying of publications, either written or electronic. The Library must ensure that available publications were not copied without authorisation. The recent changes introduced by the Labour Relations Act prevented contract workers from working for the organisation for more than a period of three months without being considered for permanent employment, which resulted in the review of the recruitment policy of the Library to ensure compliance with the legislation. The Library contracts were for a period of six

and twelve months. The Act had a big impact on the way in which the Library recruited staff.

One participant indicated that value added tax (VAT) enforced suppliers to be VAT registered. If suppliers were not VAT registered, the Library was compelled to pay VAT on their behalf. VAT was also applied to electronic resources or e-books.

The fees must fall impacted on the institutional budget. One participant said that “....the fees must fall has affected our budget so much, yes, they have to cut. The university, they have to cut, they have to cut in the budget, and remember with the Fees Must Fall, came with this thing of insourcing”. Financial constraints affected salary increases for employees and that was communicated to employees. The students were saying that, if the government did not respond to their request of free education, then universities will shut down.

Participants were of the opinion that the government laws were limiting – particularly in terms of access to information. They also said that the cybersecurity policy was protective, in that it protected unauthorised access to electronic mail of staff members.

#### ***6.5.4.5.3 The process of communicating laws to employees***

The participants were asked to indicate how the Library communicated laws affecting their work. Responses indicated that laws or legislation were communicated to employees; that the university management kept employees informed; and workshops were conducted to communicate new laws. One of the participants was quoted as saying, “There were information sessions which were held, I remember the PoPI Act because it’s recent. There were information sessions and workshops which were organised for staff members in the Library, and also emails were sent, the, our, we call it our e-notices, it’s our electronic

newsletter, it's also sent to staff to contentious them about the importance of the Act”.

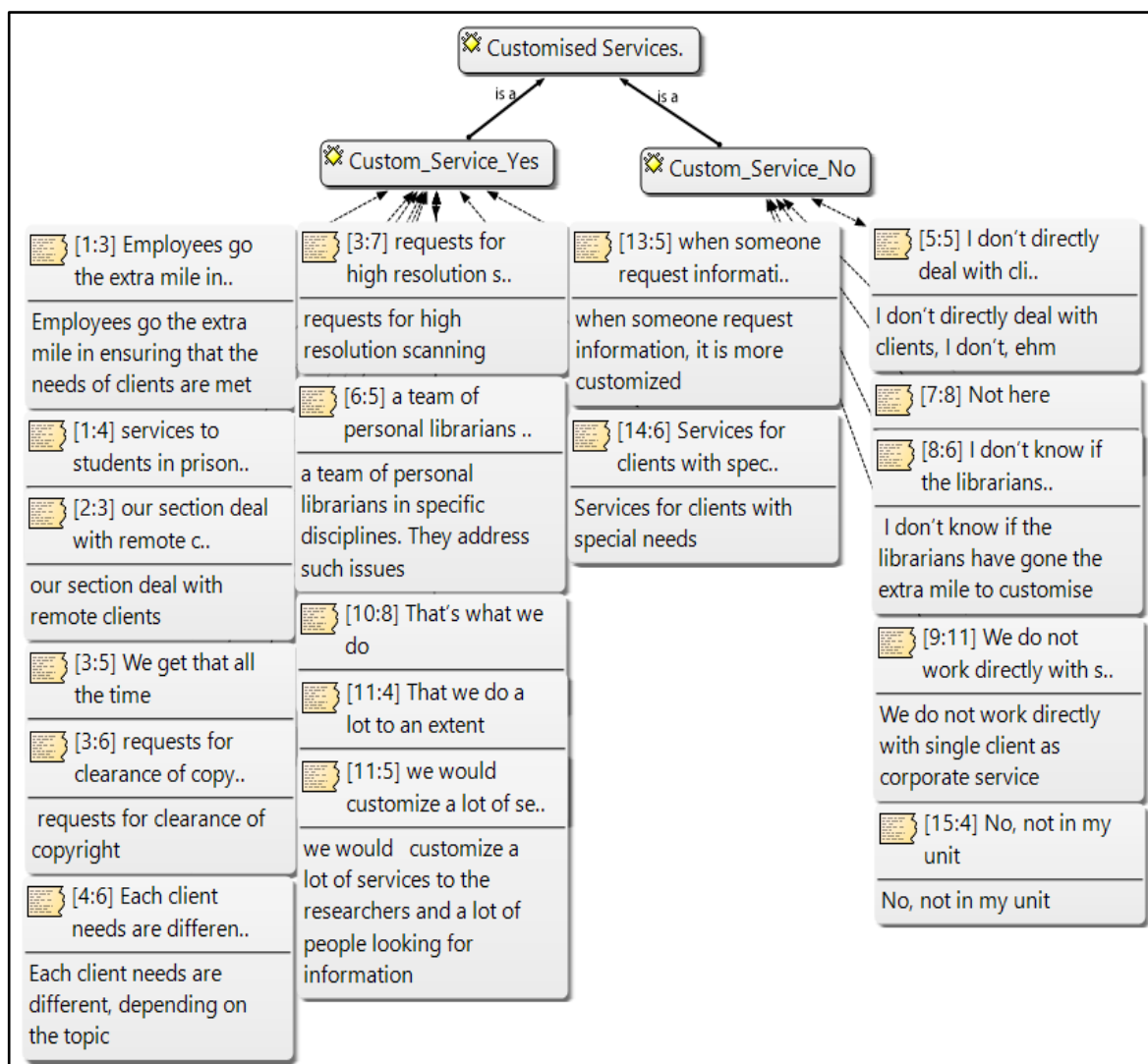
Emails, the electronic newsletter, e-notices and information sessions were used to communicate laws that affected the Library. One of the participants said that laws were mostly publicised on the intranet. The participants remarked that “The Library management communicates any changes that affect us regularly” and “Laws that affect us and our activities are communicated to staff to ensure compliance. Managers make sure that they update their subordinates of any changes that affect them”. One participant indicated that she did not have knowledge of the communication channels used to inform employees of the laws affecting the Library.

#### **6.5.4.6 Customised services**

The participants were asked if they had ever dealt with customised services in the Library and, if so, what was the nature of the request; how did they respond to such a request; and how they thought customised services affected the internal communication of the Library. The sub-themes created were: the nature of requests for customised services; response to requests for customised services; and the contribution made by customised services to the Library and its internal communication system.

##### ***6.5.4.6.1 The nature of requests for customised services***

Responses to the nature of requests for customised services are displayed in Figure 6.16. Two codes were used: Customised Services: [Custom\_Service\_Yes; Custom\_Service\_No].



**Figure 6.16: Exploring the latest developments or emerging trends in the field of organisational communication: Customised services (Source: Generated by the author using ATLAS.ti)**

In terms of the nature of requests for customised services, four participants indicated that they dealt with client-oriented services, which included attending to visiting school children, foreign visitors, tourists and researchers. Two participants indicated that they dealt with personal librarian services in specific disciplines and search services. One of the participants indicated that each client's needs were different, depending on the topic. Other than just offering books and providing information to clients, the nature of requests received by the Library employees was different.



One participant said that most of the issues addressed were beyond the scope of her operational activities; hence the need to meet the needs of clients and to provide them with answers. Some of the requests from clients included: requests for clearance of copyright; requests for high resolution scanning; assisting clients with special needs; personal librarian services; and search services. As part of customised services, the Library also rendered services to students in prison and to students with visual impairment.

Services provided to clients ranged from the development of strategies for visiting school children, tourists and researchers. One participant was quoted as saying that “We do not work directly with a single client as corporate services. There is customisation when copyright application of use is made. We stay within governance”. Employees dealt with customised services regularly. These included clients that were scattered everywhere, including clients in remote areas, who could visit to the Library. Clients visiting the Library were also assisted.

#### ***6.5.4.6.2 Responses to requests for customised services***

The participants indicated that responses to requests for customised services included recordings for students, who are disabled or visually impaired, and the delivery of study materials to the home addresses of such students, which is an exceptional service. Students were provided with the type of information that they needed, of which most of them needed to be customised. Services were rendered without additional resources from the Library.

#### ***6.5.4.6.3 Contribution of customised services to the Library***

The participants indicated that customised services either contributed positively or negatively to the Library and its internal communication system. One of the participants indicated that the Library could not give copyright clearance at times, and that the scanning service was an ad-hoc task that they performed as a favour or an added service to clients, as it took extra time to get those

things done. Customised services enhanced the performance of employees, as they got satisfaction from assisting clients. One of the participants was quoted as saying that “Employees go the extra mile in ensuring that the needs of clients are met”.

One participant said that the University changed the contact system when removing the Call Centre, leaving employees without any other option but to attend to issues relating to the University activities, such as responses to financial issues, examination queries and assignment-related issues.

There were two participants, who indicated that customised services added value to the Library system. One participant indicated that management perceived customised services as part of their function. They indicated that there existed a gap where no one seemed to take responsibility of the diverse needs of the internal clients demanding for the customisation of information services.

In summary: according to participants, the practice of customised services existed in the Library, but it was not formalised. Customised services were being looked at as the provision of specialised services to internal clients, contributing to the IIC system of the Library through the delivery of information services. The information theory applies when employees are faced with the challenge of customising the information services to the needs of the internal clients.

The question remains: are the efforts of employees dedicated to the provision of customised information services being recognised? The Library needs to formalise the practice of customised information services and provide guidelines/procedures on how to deal with the customisation of information services.

Customised services is recognised as a best practice embraced by employees in the Library and a construct that may contribute to the IICA tool.

#### **6.5.4.7 Telecommuting**

The participants were asked to indicate their understanding of the concept of telecommuting; whether the Library practiced telecommuting and, if so, what contribution did the practice have on the Library and its internal communication systems. The sub-themes generated were: understanding of the concept of telecommuting; and the contribution made by the practice of telecommuting to the Library and its internal communication system.

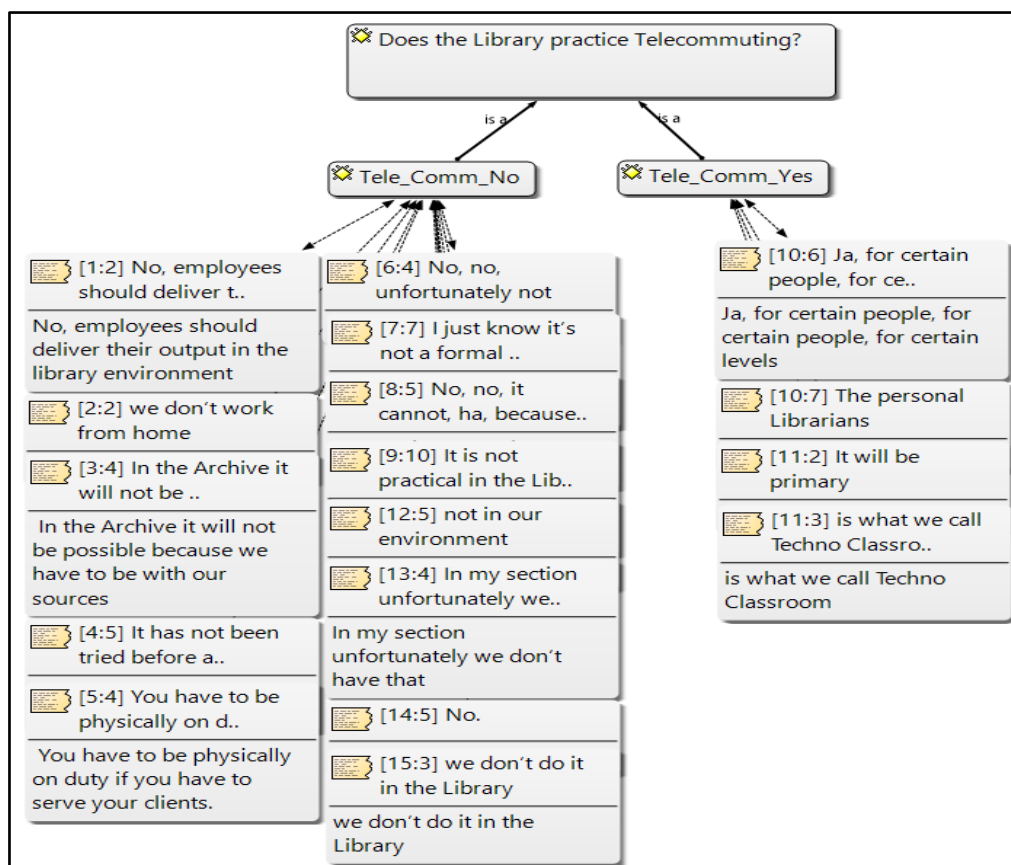
##### ***6.5.4.7.1 Understanding of the concept telecommuting***

Nine of the fifteen participants did not understand what telecommuting involved. Four participants said that telecommuting meant working from home. One participant described the concept as not being physically present in the office, while one participant indicated that the concept meant working from wherever, online. Therefore, there was a lack of understanding of the concept telecommuting.

##### ***6.5.4.7.2 Does the Library practice telecommuting?***

The participants were asked to indicate whether the Library practiced telecommuting.

Responses are presented in Figure 6.17. Two codes were used: Telecommuting: [Tele\_Comm\_No; Tele\_Comm\_Yes].



**Figure 6.17: Exploring the latest developments or emerging trends in the field of organisational communication: Telecommuting (Source: Generated by the author using ATLAS.ti)**

Four of the participants indicated that employees delivered their output in a Library environment; that they could not telecommute or work from home. One of the participants indicated that it would not be possible in the archive section to do telecommuting, because the sources were on the shelves and, therefore, employees' output should be made in the Library environment. Telecommuting was not suitable for the Library environment, because the clients were at the Library; there are walk-in clients. Therefore, due to the nature of their job, the Library employees could not work from home.

Three of the participants indicated that there was no telecommuting for librarians and two indicated that it was not feasible for some librarians and employees in certain positions. They indicated that the concept may work in the

academic environment, but not in the library environment. Three participants indicated that telecommuting would be feasible for certain positions, such as personal librarians, who did not interact with students. Two of the participants indicated that telecommuting could be an option, given the advancement in ICT systems, such as the use of video conferencing and other technology gadgets. Most participants indicated that they had walk-in clients and, therefore, the library environment did allow them to work from home.

In summary: there was a general lack of understanding of the concept of telecommuting. The majority of participants did not understand the concept; nine participants defined it as working from home, not being physically present in the office and working from wherever, online. Telecommuting could not be practiced in the Library for the following reasons: output was delivered in the Library environment; clients were in the Library; there were walk-in clients; librarians could not telecommute due to the nature of their jobs; the concept was not feasible for certain positions or librarians; telecommuting was suitable for the academic environment and not for the library environment; and telecommuting would not be possible for the archives section, because the sources were on the shelves.

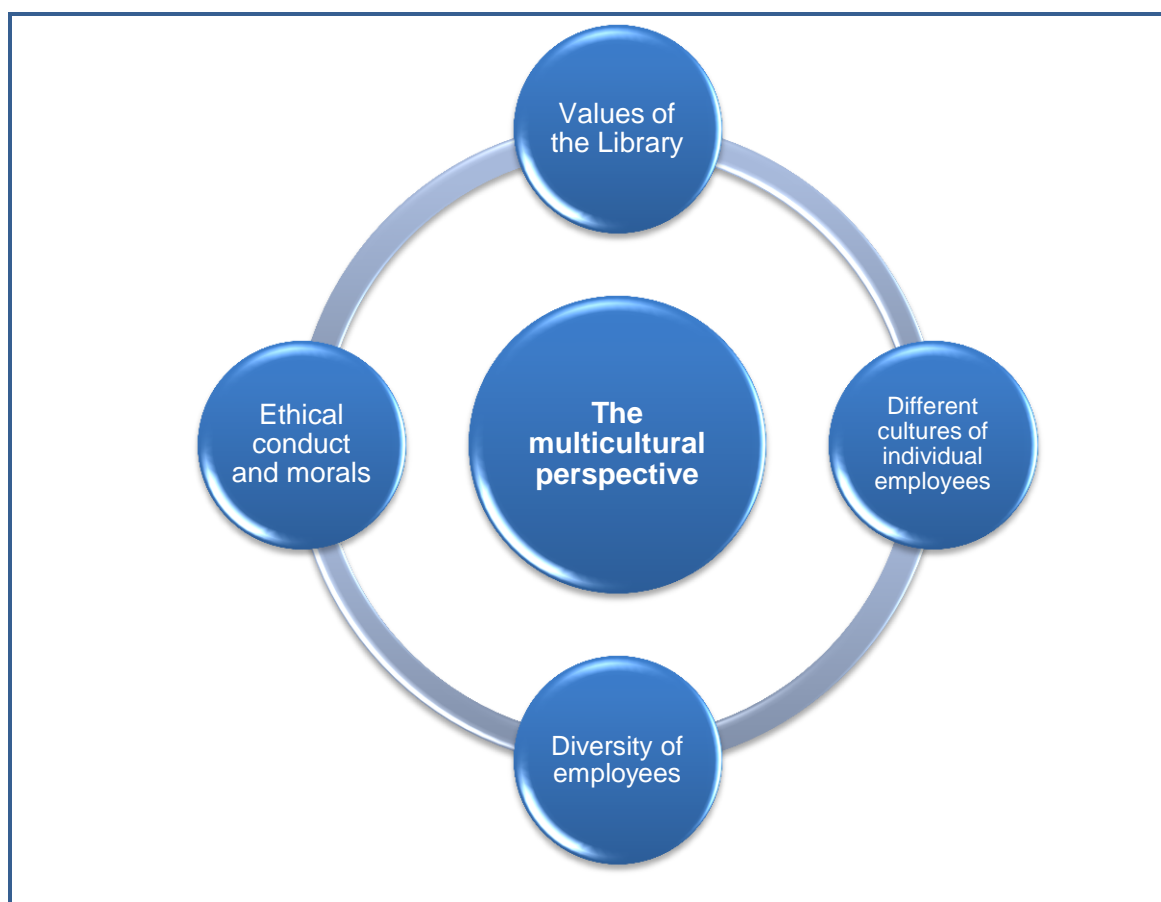
A few participants did embrace the concept, indicating that it could be feasible for certain positions, such as those of personal librarians, who did not interact with students. They further indicated the possibility of electronic communication facilitating telecommuting.

It can be concluded that telecommuting is not viable for the Library and cannot be considered a construct of the IICA tool for this study.

#### **6.5.5      *The multicultural perspective***

In addition to exploring the emerging trends, the fourth research question also explored the multicultural perspective: RQ4: *What are the emerging*

*trends/latest developments in the field of organisational communication that should be added to the new measuring tool?* The constructs explored were: values of the Library; the different cultures of individual employees; diversity of employees; and the ethical conduct and morals of employees. The diagrammatic presentations of the themes on the multicultural perspective are shown in Figure 6.18.



**Figure 6.18: Sub-themes on the multicultural perspective (Source: Author's fieldwork)**

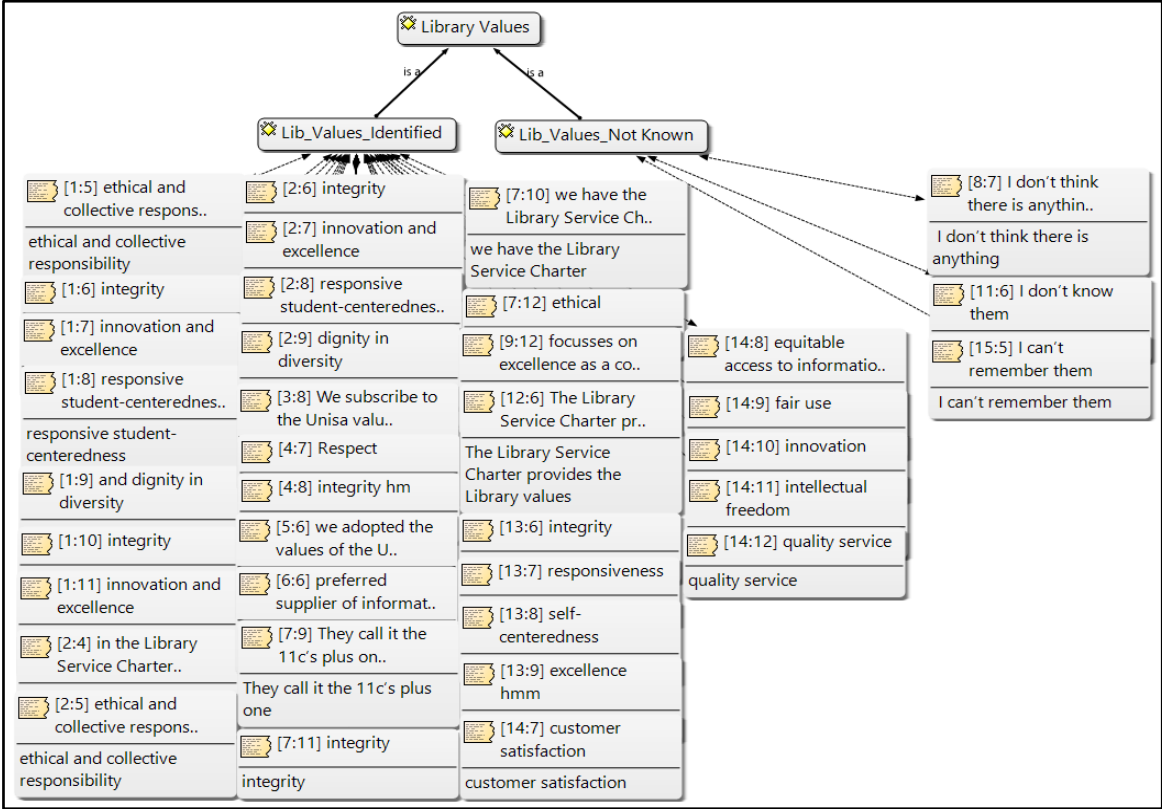
#### **6.5.5.1 Values of the Library**

The participants were asked if the Library had set values, and if so, what these values were and how the identified values influenced the IIC system of the Library. The sub-themes created for the theme were: set values of the Library;

compliance with the values; and the contribution of values to the Library and its communication system.

**6.5.5.1.1 Set values of the Library**

The Library had a set of values that are part of the Library Service Charter, informed by the University Service Charter. The values included ethical and collective responsibility, integrity, innovation and excellence, responsive student-centeredness and dignity in diversity. When asked whether they were familiar with the Library values, participants identified the values shown in Figure 6.19. Two codes were identified: Library Values identified [Lib\_Values\_Identified] and Library Values Not known [Lib\_Values\_Not\_known].



**Figure 6.19: The multicultural perspective: Values of the Library (Source: Generated by the author using ATLAS.ti)**

Out of the fifteen participants, eight identified innovation and excellence as values; seven identified integrity; six identified dignity in diversity, ethical and collective responsibility and responsive student-centeredness. Some of the

participants were aware of the Library Service Charter, although they had forgotten the actual values.

In addition to the formal Library values, the participants managed to identify seven other values. – Two of the participants identified customer satisfaction as a value. The other participant said that “The Library Service Charter contains the Library values and those include: customer satisfaction, equitable access to information in all forms, fair use, innovation, intellectual freedom and quality service”. Another participant said that “We always highlight respect, especially respect to the person in front of you, and we were saying the other day that we must respond to the student within 48 hours, if the phone rings, it must not ring so many times”. Therefore, the values added were customer satisfaction; equitable access to information; preferred supplier of information; fair use; intellectual freedom; quality service; and respect.

One of the participants indicated that they had their vision and mission statements, which were supplemented by the motto. The other participant was quoted as saying “I think the Unisa Library values should apply, I don’t know them. They are written somewhere, in some other documents. They would apply and they should. I am sure if you go online, you can find them”. This pointed to the participant being aware of the existence of values, without having any knowledge of them. One participant said that the Library values were taken as normal and another said that the main value was the preferred supplier of information. Lastly, a participant said, “I know the Library has a charter, and the charter has the same values as the Unisa values. We subscribe to the Unisa values, it’s not separate, it’s not different values”.

In summary, it can be concluded that the majority of employees were aware of the existence of the Library values, but could not recall them.



#### **6.5.5.1.2 Compliance with the Library values**

In terms of compliance with the Library values, participants were asked the question, *Do you think employees abide by the Library values?* The participants gave their views in the manner in which employees complied with the Library values. Eleven participants indicated that employees were at different stages of compliance; four participants indicated that there was no compliance and one participant was not sure about the compliance of employees with the Library values.

Participants were quoted saying: “I can say they are at the compliance level. I wouldn’t say above”; “Yes, definitely they do”; “I think majority complies”; “Some abide, some don’t, the majority abides, but there is room for improvement”; “I think the Library is one of the few places where they are actually still observing those values. People are respectful, adhere to most of the university rules and policies”; “Yes, they comply with values in terms of conduct that include research needs of clients and the selection of resources”, “Yes, like I, in most cases they observe the values. The way that they attend to the clients as well, they are responsible, here and there you find one or two people who sometimes, they don’t observe the values, but I would say that the majority observe the values in terms of conduct, that include needs of clients and the selection of resources”; “Yes” and “They are, they do”.

One of the participants said that the majority complies, while the other participant said that there were a few elements that did not comply. Another participant was quoted as saying “Compliance with the Library values is estimated at 90%” and another participant indicated that “I think they, they may be, eh, issues concerning trust and integrity and sometimes transparency. Ehm, but it’s, its, how can I say it, I think there are underlying issues behind those”. When asked to clarify the underlying issues, the participant indicated that “I think in terms of the organisational culture, or the culture of structure and protocol and I think sometimes that have an effect on the integrity of people or on the ethical or transparency of people”.

In terms of ethical responsibility, one participant said, “If we have the tendency of coming late, you know, we don’t see it if we come ten minutes later, we don’t see it as wrong because everyone does it, so, it’s part of the culture to come late for a meeting, or to work”.

In terms of non-compliance with the Library values, the participant was quoted saying, “There are very few of them who’ll, who’ll, who’ll understand their clear role and mandate at work. We have to constantly push these people”. The participant indicated that he could not push adults around, but that they were respectful and adhered to University rules and policies.

Measures implemented in the Library to ensure compliance with values included diversity workshops that raised awareness among employees about the need to respect one another’s values and differences. In this way, the employees were reminded of the Unisa Library values. The Executive Director cautioned members to accommodate one another. One of the participants indicated that the University values were enforced from time to time.

#### ***6.5.5.1.3 Contribution of the Library values to the internal communication system***

The participants were asked their opinion regarding the contribution of the Library values to the internal communication system. Six of the participants indicated that the employees were ethical and adhered to the collective responsibility of the Library.

Three participants said that the employees were respectful and embraced one another. They tolerated one another and understood that they belonged and needed to work together. One of the participants said that employees had the responsibility to be ethical. The participant was quoted as saying that “You have to be ethical when it comes to the job. We all have the responsibility to be

ethical. It is good for us to have the ethics office, it's good for us to have our values, it's good for us to promote an ethical culture and the ethics of the university". Most participants were of the opinion that the Library values influenced internal communication positively.

One of the participants indicated that management made subordinates feel inferior, saying: "Values are twisted, yes. How should I put it now, but then they are really, hmm, trying to let the person feel inferior, being sarcastic, yes". One of the participants said that organisational culture had an effect on integrity, ethics or the transparency of employees.

In summary: participants were of the opinion that the majority of employees did abide by the Library values. However, organisational culture and protocol were blamed for incidents of non-compliance affecting the integrity, transparency and ethics of individual employees.

#### **6.5.5.2 Different cultures of individual employees**

The participants were asked if there were differences in the cultures of individual employees in the Library and if so, what were the differences; whether participants thought cultural differences influenced the IIC system of the Library and, if not, whether there was a shared culture for the Library.

The sub-themes created from the theme were: cultural differences of individual employees; contribution of cultural differences to the IIC system of the Library; and the shared culture for Library employees. The sub-themes are discussed in the following sections.

##### ***6.5.5.2.1 Cultural differences of individual employees***

Seven of the participants indicated that there were no cultural differences between employees and four indicated that there were cultural differences. Responses from participants are shown in Table 6.3.

**Table 6.3: Cultural differences of individual employees**

<b>Codes</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
No cultural differences	7
Racial composition	7
There is cultural differences	4
Cultural difference based on designated group	3
Gender composition	3
Differences are handled with maturity	2
Individual personalities	1
Marital status	1
Observing limitation in other employees	1
People no longer subscribe to those rigid cultural differences	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>

**(Source: Author's fieldwork)**

Out of the fifteen participants, seven indicated that the Library experienced racial differences. One participant identified ethnic differences. The racial composition of the Library showed blacks as being the majority. Three participants identified differences based on designated groups and one participant identified differences in colour, race, creed and disability. Three participants indicated that the cultural differences also took the form of gender composition, in that the Library had more female than male employees. Age and marital status were also identified by one participant as a form of difference between employees.

Another participant said that employees no longer subscribed to those rigid cultural differences. She said that blacks working together tended to greet one another, but whites just passed on. On the other hand, blacks also did not greet a white person, resulting in cultural differences. She concluded by saying that employees had reached a stage where they acknowledged that they had different cultures and this at least helped them to thrive in the working environment.

In managing their differences, two participants indicated that differences were handled with maturity: employees were mature and they understood and embraced one another's differences. One participant stated that "We all understand. This is a diverse country; this is a new South Africa. Differences are handled in a mature way. There are those differences, and we handle them in a mature way". The other participant said that "We also have Moslem people, you know, so I think overall we're religious people. I think overall we respect each other".

One of the participants felt that there were no cultural differences; that differences resulted from individual personalities. One participant said, "Yes, diversity of the Library includes observing the limitations in other employees that prevent them from doing certain job such as diabetes, back pains, deafness".

#### ***6.5.5.2.2 Contribution of cultural differences in the IIC system***

In terms of the contribution of cultural differences to the IIC system of the Library, participants indicated that informal communication influenced internal communication; that racial diversity was exacerbated by not communicating things, resulting in grapevine taking over. Participants felt that communication speed and trust were important when dealing with issues of diversity and that meetings and emails played a major role in that regard. Lack of trust and communication speed resulted in the grapevine. Another participant quoted a racial incident, where a white manager had to give away a black lady's desk to a person who had been on the job for two months, while the black lady had been on the job for ten years. The incident created conflict between employees, resulting from lack of communication prior to taking action.

Most of the participants said that they accommodated and supported one another; that they had reached the stage of maturity that made it possible for them to overcome their differences. They were an excellent team that discussed

diversity in meetings; expressed ideas freely; hosted quarterly functions; ate together; attended one another's weddings and functions; and understood one another, because they are a very small team. They indicated that they discussed and understood one another's culture. One participant indicated that the Library provided special parking for people with back pain.

On the other hand, one of the participants indicated that they were diverse in the manner in which they interacted with technology. They said that older employees took longer to adapt to new technology than the younger ones. One of the participants said that female domination resulted in empathy, while another said that females tended to gossip a lot. One of the participants indicated that employees were encouraged to observe and apply caution when communicating with members experiencing limitations in their lives.

#### ***6.5.5.2.3 Shared culture for the Library employees***

In terms of shared culture, the participants indicated that they had shared values and that they respected and understood one another's culture. One of the participants said: "We encourage each other to be open and speak about it, but we don't have issues with each other. We might get into each other's nerves, yes, that happens because we see each other eight hours a day, but in general we are a nice team and we care about each other. If someone is sick, we try to go and visit. We phone and even WhatsApp. So, this, this to me is one of the nicest team that I have ever worked with".

#### **6.5.5.3 Diversity of employees**

The participants were asked if they thought the Library employees were diverse and, if so, in what way were the Library employees diverse. The sub-theme generated from this theme was diversity of the Library employees.

Four of the participants indicated that the diversity of employees was based on racial composition, while one participant identified gender composition in the

Library environment being female dominated, as mentioned earlier. Another participant indicated that diversity did not only mean race; it also meant culture – i.e. race, gender and culture.

One of the participants also said that diversity as a concept was crucial and makes business sense. Apart from it being desirable, it made business sense, because it meant that your systems must respond better to the client base and your products and services.

One of the participants indicated that conflicts resulting from the diversity of employees were minimal, pointing out that “The majority of employees realise that we are in the work environment and do not have to impose their cultures on others”. The other participant said: “I don’t think in the Library you have that black or white thing anymore, that is according to my perception, because, hmm, you have black friends, black people that you sit with and that you interact with and you have them on your Facebook. To me, it’s becoming more integrated, but you will have exceptions”.

#### **6.5.5.4 Ethical conduct and morals**

The participants were asked to describe the conduct of employees in relation to their communication with other employees in the Library and how such conduct influenced the IIC system of the Library. The sub-themes generated were: conduct of employees in relation to their communication and the contribution of their attitude towards the IIC system.

Three of the participants said that ethical conduct was at an acceptable level. The participants said: “Here morals and everything it is ok”; “Ethical conduct of employees is at an acceptable standard. People who do not care exist, but there are no major blow ups in the conduct of employees” and “I think there is a moral, there is an ethical, hmm, I think there is, the performance is good, but I

think there is a gap. At times, as you say, some moral support is needed. There is a gap. There is, some kind of nurturing that you need, moral support”.

It can be noted that there is good performance in terms of ethical conduct and morals. One of the participants indicated that they were addressing employment equity, while another indicated the importance of employees communicating with respect and in an honourable manner. However, it was commented that the difference in culture sometimes prompted subordinates to behave unethically.

The participants indicated that they conducted many workshops on ethics and that they also organised ethics workshops for employees in their section, so that they kept on reminding them of how to conduct themselves. One participant remarked that “We are a sensitive team that observes each other’s culture such as the Ramadan. We are interactive. Personality traits do not impact on the communication. We respect each other and do not reveal confidential matters of one person to others. We do not tremble on each other’s feelings. We also share recipes”.

On the other hand, another participant said that “There have been instances, but that does not warrant discipline. They are those who feel that their voices are not heard. Managers impose their views, not to the extent of communication breakdown. We think you can do this and that”.

Emanating from the foregoing views of the participants, it can be deduced that employees are sensitive in their conduct. The IIC system was, therefore, not affected by the conduct of employees.

#### ***6.5.5.4.1 Contribution of employee attitude to the internal communication system***

The participants were asked to indicate how employee attitude contributed to the IIC system of the Library. They indicated that there was communication

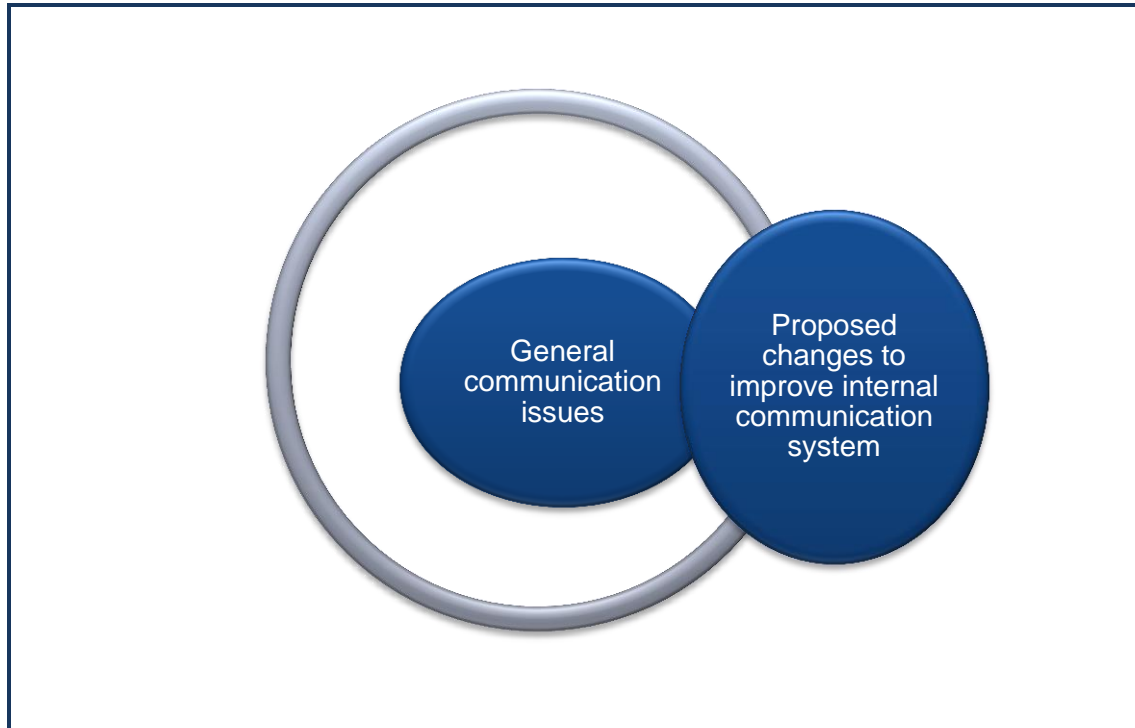


freedom, congruence in verbal communication and that they managed to resolve unethical conduct. One of the participants said that “I really value the team that we work in and I think in the Library, the communication is not really in the teams where there is a problem. I think it’s more top management and lower levels of staff where there is a problem of communication and perception. It’s not really a black and white thing anymore”.

Apart from the communication problems experienced between top management and lower level employees, the attitude of employees towards the internal communication of the Library was deemed acceptable.

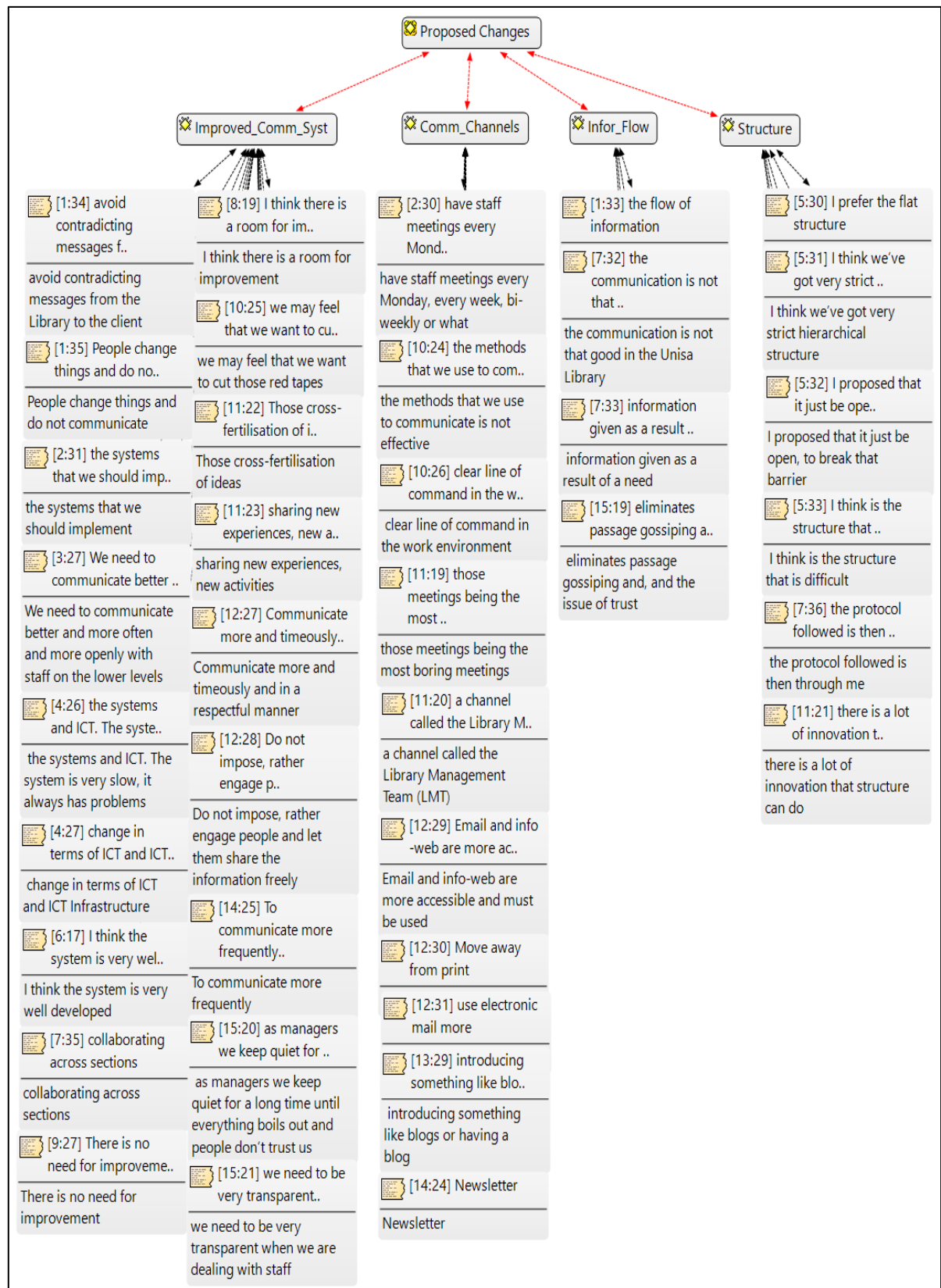
#### **6.5.6 General communication issues**

The third research question also explored the proposed changes to the communication system of the Library. The following question was asked: RQ3: *What communication systems are employees exposed to in the organisation?* The participants were asked a general question about the changes that they could propose: *If given a chance to improve the IIC system of the Library, what changes do you think you can propose?* As shown in Figure 6. 20, there was only one theme with one sub-theme.



**Figure 6.20: Sub-themes on general communication issues (Source: Author's fieldwork)**

Apart from the two participants, who did not propose any changes, proposals made by the thirteen participants are displayed in Figure 6.21. Four codes were used: Improved Communication System [Improved\_Comm\_Syst]; Communication Channels [Comm\_Channels]; Information Flow [Infor\_Flow] and Structure.



**Figure 6.21: General communication issues: Proposed changes to the IIC system (Source: Generated by the author using ATLAS.ti)**

The issues that were addressed, are summarised in the following sections:

#### **6.5.6.1 The need to measure communication**

Participants indicated that there was a need to measure communication to establish the extent of the communication taking place in the Library and that which needed to be communicated. One participant said “The systems that we should implement, if we can reach a stage where we would be able to measure our communication and indicate whether it had made an impact in terms of what we are trying to do as a team. Do the surveys in terms of how we are performing, so it might be a tool that will enable us to improve on certain things”. A measurement tool for IIC was recommended for the Library to provide guidance on the communication system and processes.

#### **6.5.6.2 Improved communication system**

Participants indicated that communication in the Library must be improved to cut red tape; engage people; avoid imposing ideas on them; communicate more often, timeously and frequently with staff at lower levels to eliminate rumours; communicate all changes with relevant parties to avoid contradicting messages from the Library to the clients; transparency, openness and allow for the sharing of information and knowledge; collaboration across sections to ensure cross-fertilisation of ideas, experiences, ensure integrated message to clients.

One participant pointed out the following: “There is communication, but is like, it’s not enough, it should be enough. At some point it is an issue of hearing things from outside, then you come and question, it’s then that it gets communicated or you sit down and discuss”. Another participant was quoted as saying “Do not impose, rather engage people and let them share the information freely. If the environment is not safe, people will refrain from communicating and sharing information”. The other participant remarked as follows: “Communicate more and timeously and in a respectful manner”. The other participant was quoted saying that “We need to communicate better and more often and more openly with staff at the lower levels, hmm”.

It was indicated that the ICT systems and infrastructure were very slow with a lot of down-time being experienced, resulting in delays in turnaround time. To address ICT challenges, the digital strategy for the Presidential Library was being developed. One participant indicated that the proposed changes to ICT infrastructure should include innovations that would cater for the communication needs of people with disabilities.

#### **6.5.6.3 Communication channels**

Changes proposed by five participants included the need for clear lines of communication; clear reporting channels; clear reporting structures; weekly staff meetings; and the Library Management Team meeting. Although the email was identified as the most preferred channel, face-to-face meetings were recommended as the most effective channels for communication with subordinates and other units. One participant indicated a lack of clarity in terms of the reporting structure of the branches of the Library, particularly the Florida branch.

Participants felt that employees should agree on the desired channel and that the channel must not be superimposed. The email and info-web were identified as the most accessible channels that should be used effectively. There was a need to move away from print to electronic mail, such as the introduction of blogs and WhatsApp. One participant indicated that “Email and info-web are more accessible and must be used. Move away from print and use electronic mail more”.

The newsletter was identified as the most effective channel. When asked what specific change was desired about the newsletter, the participant’s response was: “To communicate more frequently”. One participant said “Our e-notice is sort of an electronic newsletter which is sent to everybody, but then you find sometimes people say I didn’t see it. It’s, it’s more to do, I think there were

individuals, how do you go about promoting and ensuring that people read. It's there on your computer or laptop, but then people say we never saw it".

#### **6.5.6.4 Information flow**

Six participants pointed out that the protocol and the hierarchical structure limited the flow of information and that communication was not good. Information should be freely available and not given on a need basis. The availability of information would eliminate passage gossip and encourage trust. However, participants proposed the Library encouraging information sharing. One participant indicated that "An area of the IIC system of the Library that needs change is the flow of information. People change things and do not communicate".

#### **6.5.6.5 Organisational structure**

Most participants said that there was a need for a shift from a strict hierarchical structure to a flat and open structure that broke down barriers to effective communication. The current structure limited access to management, creating a communication barrier within the Library and between different branches of the Library. One participant said that "I always feel that they are remotely, very remote, even Florida, they feel that they are just there, you know, I forget about them".

In addition, diversity was identified as an important factor in the communication of an organisation. Changes desired in the Library included the diversity of the workplace, depicting the demographics in South Africa.

#### **6.5.6.6 Best communication practices**

The following best practice was identified during interview discussions with members of management in the Library: customised service that involved the customisation of information services to the specific needs of clients, depending

on the kind of information requested, as the needs of clients differed. Subject matter experts in different fields handled such requests. The proposal of converting tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge that could be stored for future needs was also regarded as the best practice.

## **6.6 Conclusion**

This chapter applied theory by analysing the results of the qualitative data by using ATLAS.ti. The main research question was to determine the most adequate tool for measuring IIC in the Unisa Library.

The results indicated that there was no instrument for measuring IIC in the Library, although the Library was in the process of acquiring a research tool called LibQUAL. Participants indicated that the measuring tool may assist the Library in achieving the communication objectives, such as measuring the success of communication with subordinates; assessing tacit knowledge and information sharing; serving as a means of checking and testing if the existing communication is desired; providing guidance on how to communicate, the issues to communicate, the preferred media and the desired changes in the communication of the Library; and that the evaluation results could be used to improve the communication system of the Library and enhance service delivery.

The following sub-constructs that may contribute to the new construct of organisational culture were adopted: employment equity; information communication technology (ICT), which mediates the flow of information; changes in government action/legislation; and customised services, which prevail in the Library as a best practice. In terms of the Library values, compliance with the Library Service Charter was at an acceptable level. Diversity was adopted as part of employment equity (EE), as the Library employees differed in terms of race, age, marital status, ethnicity, gender and colour. Transformation and BEE were seen as interventions aimed at the facilitation of change and the achievement of economic equality.

Telecommuting was not adopted in this study, because the Library employees indicated they could not telecommute due to the nature of their work.

The results also identified the following areas of improvement: clear channels of communication; improved communication between managers and employees at lower levels; knowledge sharing and the management of tacit knowledge; the recognition of social media for internal communication; and regular communication through the newsletters.

The next chapter presents and discusses the findings of the quantitative study.



## **CHAPTER 7: ANALYSIS OF QUANTITATIVE RESULTS**

### **7.1 Introduction**

Chapter 6 discussed the results of the qualitative data analysis obtained through interviews with members of management at the Unisa Library. Based on the purpose of this study, the objective of this chapter is to present and discuss the findings from the quantitative study to identify a tool for measuring integrated internal communication at the Unisa Library. A mixed approach was undertaken by applying qualitative and quantitative approaches in the development of a measuring tool.

In order to answer the main research question, this chapter presents the results by using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. This chapter firstly describes the data collection procedure, followed by the results of the reliability analysis, using Cronbach alpha, and a descriptive analysis of quantitative data. The descriptive analysis of quantitative data was conducted on socio-demographic characteristics and the constructs that informed the survey questionnaire, making use of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The extent of the relationship between the constructs was discussed by using the Pearson correlation coefficient analysis. The chapter concludes with a summary of the quantitative data analysis.

### **7.2 Data collection process**

The data collection method used in the final survey was the printed self-administered questionnaire, instead of the proposed online Survey Monkey system. The change in the data collection method was informed by the poor response rate to the online survey conducted during the pre-testing of the questionnaire. The pre-testing was conducted over a period of two months. Out of a total target of 20 employees, nine employees responded to the online

survey. This resulted in the change in data collection strategy from online to print self-administered questionnaires.

In facilitating the distribution of questionnaires, the contact details of members of management obtained during qualitative interviews were used to establish the number of members in the Library directorates. On 30 November 2017, questionnaires were printed and distributed to members of management, who gave them to the subordinates to complete. At that point, the total Library staff complement consisted of 222 employees.

Follow-up on unreturned questionnaires was conducted in January 2018. In spite of all the effort made to increase the response rate, 72 responses (64.9%) were received. However, based on the criteria discussed in the research methodology in Chapter 5, it is concluded that the results are reliable and can be used in future studies, because they represent the opinions and views of employees at the Library.

### 7.3 Reliability

Cronbach alpha was used to measure the internal consistency of the measurement tool. In statistics, Cronbach's alpha is a coefficient of internal consistency commonly used as an estimate of reliability (Manerikar & Manerikar 2015). In this study, Questions 1 to 8 of the survey questionnaire focused on the demographics. The reliability analysis was conducted on Questions 9 to 18. The results of the reliability analysis are provided in Table 7.1.

**Table 7.1: Reliability results of the constructs**

Construct	No. of items	Cronbach's alpha	Acceptable level
Q9. Information received	7	.801	Good
Q10. Information desired	7	.821	Good

Construct	No. of items	Cronbach's alpha	Acceptable level
Q11. Sources of information	9	.705	Good
Q12. Feedback on communication sent	6	.620	Acceptable
Q13. Information received through formal channels of communication	10	.785	Good
Q14. Information received through informal channels of communication	9	.916	Excellent
Q15. Relational	8	.835	Good
Q16. Informational/relational	9	.808	Good
Q17. Organisational outcomes	7	.894	Good
Q18. Organisational culture	19	.914	Excellent
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>.950</b>	<b>Excellent</b>

(Source: Author's fieldwork)

As mentioned in the research methodology, Manerikar and Manerikar (2015) propose that, if Cronbach alpha is  $\geq .9$ , reliability is excellent (high-stakes testing);  $\geq .7$  is good (low-stakes testing);  $\geq .6$  is acceptable;  $\geq .5$  is poor; and  $< .5$  is unacceptable. Most scales had a reliability of over .7, with the exception of the construct *feedback on communication sent*, which was acceptable.

In this case, the reliability of all the other constructs was good, as Hair *et al* (2014) confirm that the general agreed upon limit for Cronbach alpha is .7, although in exploratory research, the limit may decrease to .6. Therefore, the reliability on feedback on communication sent was acceptable, as the mixed research method was adopted in this study, consisting of both the exploratory and descriptive methods. The reliability of the entire instrument gave a

Cronbach alpha of .950, which is excellent. It can be concluded that the measurement tool was reliable.

## **7.4 Descriptive analysis of quantitative data**

The descriptive analysis of quantitative data provide results that either confirm or refute the existing literature and the findings of the qualitative method. The socio-demographic characteristics and the IICA constructs were analysed.

### **7.4.1 *Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents***

The socio-demographic information collected for the study included: gender, race, age, highest educational qualification, current position, directorate, years of experience in current position and employment status.

As indicated in Chapter 5 on research methodology, the sample size used in the quantitative study followed the guideline provided by Gay, Mills and Airasian (2011:139), which holds that, if the population is 100 or fewer, do not sample, but rather take the whole population as your sample; and if the population size is around 500, 50% should be sampled. This study adopted the latter approach, because the population was 222, which was more than 100.

Out of an intended target of 111, a total of 72 Library employees participated in the study, giving a response rate of 64.9%, with a standard deviation of 19.7, as reported by Baruch (1999:32) in a meta-analysis of 176 academic journals. Table 7.2 presents the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents.

**Table 7.2: Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents**

<b>Socio-demographic characteristics</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	26	36.1%
	Female	46	63.9%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Race</b>	Blacks	52	73.3%
	Whites	17	
	Coloureds	1	
	Indians	1	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Age</b>	Below 30 years	6	8.3%
	30–39 years	26	36.1%
	40–49 years	13	18.1%
	50–59 years	22	30.6%
	50 years and above	25	6.9%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Educational qualifications</b>	Matric/ Grade 12 or below	10	13.9%
	Certificate/Diploma	9	12.5%
	Bachelor's degree	19	26.4%
	Honours degree	23	31.9%
	Postgraduate degree	11	15.3%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Current position</b>	Middle management/ supervisor	9	12.9%
	Specialist	20	28.6%
	Administrative staff	40	57.1%
	Other	1	1.4%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Directorate</b>	Information Resource Distribution	26	37.1%
	Information Resource Content Management	13	18.6%

<b>Socio-demographic characteristics</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
	Library Corporate Services	17	24.3%
	Client Services	14	20.0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Years in current position</b>	Less than a year	11	15.3%
	3–5 years	15	20.8%
	6–10 years	31	43.1%
	More than 10 years	15	20.8%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

(Source: Author's fieldwork)

#### **7.4.1.1 Gender**

There were 36.9% (n=26) males and 63.9% (n=46) females, which was mainly attributed to the Library being dominated by females. There were less males compared to national figures employment statistics reported in the *Quarterly Labour Force Survey* (Quarter 3: 2017), where 50.6% were females and 49.4% were males. These findings support the Library staff composition as contained in the *Unisa Library Annual Report, 2014/2015* and the findings of the qualitative results, which revealed the Library being female dominated (Statistics South Africa 2017; Unisa Library 2015).

#### **7.4.1.2 Race**

In terms of ethnicity, 73.3% (n=52) were black/African; 23.9% (n=17) were white; 1.4% (n=1) coloureds; and 1.4% (n=1) Indians. These findings were supported by the qualitative results, which revealed shortages of coloureds and Indians in the Library. According to the *Quarterly Labour Force Survey* (Quarter 3: 2017), the racial composition was 80.1% blacks; 8.1% whites; 9.1%

coloureds; and 2.7% Indians/Asians. Therefore, the racial compositions of the survey were not in line with the South Africa national figures.

#### **7.4.1.3 Age**

Most of the respondents were over 30 years of age. About 8.3% (n=6) were below 30 years; 36.1% (n=26) were aged between 30 to 39 years; 18.1% (n=13) were 40–49 years; 30.6% (n=22) were between 50–59 years; and 6.9% (n=5) are 50 years and older. This supported the views of the interviews with members of management in terms of the Library needing to employ younger professionals to replace retiring employees.

#### **7.4.1.4 Educational qualifications**

There was variation in the educational background of the respondents, with the majority having degrees. About 31.9% (n=23) had Honours degrees; 26.4% (n=19) had Bachelor's degrees; 15.3% (n=11) had postgraduate degrees, while 13.9% (n=10) had matric or below; and 12.5% (n=9) had certificates or diplomas. In other words, only 26.4% were not degree holders. These findings were supported by the qualitative results, which indicated that the Library prioritises skills development and that a talent management programme was introduced to bridge the skills gap.

The *Unisa Library 2016 Annual Report* further confirms the findings by presenting the following qualifications obtained in 2016: six members obtained a Bachelor of Information Science; one member completed a Bachelor of Commerce; one member completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Library and Information Science; one member completed a National Diploma in Chemical Engineering; and one member completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Library and Information Science.

#### ***7.4.1.5 Current position***

In terms of current position, 57.1% (n=40) were administrative staff; 28.6% (n=20) were specialists; and 12.9% (n=9) were either in middle management or supervisors. The remaining 1.4% (n=1) were other members of staff, who were not in the above-mentioned categories. In this way, the majority of respondents were administrative staff.

#### ***7.4.1.6 Directorate***

About 37.1% (n=26) were from the Information Resource Distribution Directorate; 24.3% (n=17) were from Library Corporate Services; 20% (n=14) were from Client Services; and 18.4% (n=13) were From Information Resource Content Management. Therefore, the majority of the respondents were from the Information Resource Distribution Directorate, which comprised the majority of employees in the Library, with a total of 92 staff members.

#### ***7.4.1.7 Years in current position***

The respondents were asked to indicate the number of years that they had been working in their current position – i.e. their work experience. About 15.3% (n=11) had been working for less than a year; 20.8% (n=15) had been working for 3–5 years; 43.1% (n=31) had been working for 6–10 years; and 20.8% (n=15) had been working for more than 10 years. The majority of the respondents had more than five years working experience in their current positions.

#### ***7.4.1.8 Employment status***

In terms of employment status, all respondents were permanent staff members, although the survey questionnaire was designed to accommodate all employees (permanent and temporary/contract) in the Library.



### 7.4.2 Descriptive statistics on information received

The information received was assessed by using seven items measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always), adopted from the ICA audit (Downs & Adrian 2004). The descriptive statistics are presented in Table 7.3 with the top items having the highest mean.

**Table 7.3: Information received**

Information received	Level of occurrence					Mean	Std dev
	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never		
Q9g. Personnel news (e.g. new appointments, changes in remuneration packages)	30.3% (20)	50.0% (33)	13.6% (9)	1.5% (1)	4.5% (3)	4.00	.96
Q9e. Changes taking place in the Library	18.8% (13)	29.0% (20)	37.7% (26)	11.6% (8)	2.9% (2)	3.49	1.02
Q9a. Requirements of my job	28.8% (19)	22.7% (15)	19.7% (13)	18.2% (12)	10.6% (7)	3.41	1.36
Q9b. The Library policies	19.4% (13)	23.9% (16)	38.8% (26)	13.4% (9)	4.5% (3)	3.40	1.09
Q9c. Employee benefits	19.1% (13)	23.5% (16)	39.7% (27)	13.2% (9)	4.4% (3)	3.40	1.08
Q9f. The Library performance	12.5% (8)	20.3% (13)	34.4% (22)	26.6% (17)	6.3% (4)	3.06	1.11
Q9d. Government action/legislation affecting the Library	4.5% (3)	13.6% (9)	33.3% (22)	25.8% (17)	22.7% (15)	2.52	1.13

(Source: Author's fieldwork)

A majority of 80.3% ( $n=53$ ) of the respondents indicated that they often received information on personnel news (e.g. new appointments, changes in remuneration packages), with a mean of 4.00 ( $M = 4.00$ ,  $SD = .96$ ). The rest of the items has mean above three, while library performance is slightly above three and government action/legislation affecting the Library is below three. Almost 50% – i.e. 47.8% ( $n=33$ ) – indicated that they received information on the changes taking place in the Library more often, with a mean of 3.49 ( $M = 3.49$ ,  $SD = 1.02$ ) and 51.7% ( $n=34$ ) indicated that the information on the requirements of their job was received more often, with a mean of 3.41 ( $M = 3.87$ ,  $SD = 1.36$ ).

The two items with the lowest mean were the library performance and the government action/legislation affecting the Library. About 32.9% ( $n=21$ ) indicated that information on the library performance was rarely or never received, while 34.4% ( $n=22$ ) indicated that they sometimes received information on the library performance, with a mean of 3.06 ( $M = 3.06$ ,  $SD = 1.11$ ). About 48.5% ( $n=32$ ) indicated that information on the government action/legislation affecting the Library was rarely or never received with a mean of 2.52 ( $M = 2.52$ ,  $SD = 1.13$ ).

Looking at the means in Table 7.3, the analysis above showed the information that was received more often was personnel news. The information that was sometimes received included changes taking place in the Library, job requirements, library policies, employee benefits, library performance and government action/legislation affecting the Library.

All constructs had standard deviations close to 1 and using the empirical rule, 68.26% of the participants had ratings between 2 and 4 ( $\pm 1$  standard deviation from the mean). In conclusion, employees often received information on personnel news.

These results were in line with the literature, which indicates information on personnel news as crucial in keeping employees informed about the organisation, thereby providing motivational quality that helps them to identify with the organisation (Downs & Adrian 2004), and that employees often receive information on personnel news through downward communication from management in the form of departmental progress reports, information, messages and socialisation (Lunenburg 2010a; Lunenburg 2010b; Hargie & Tourish 2009; Hasel 2011; Cheney *et al* 2011).

The results were also in line with the excellence theory, which recognises an organisation as an open system promoting the symmetrical communication in which people freely exchange information.

#### **7.4.3 *Descriptive statistics on information desired***

In terms of information desired, there were seven items measuring the construct. The items were assessed on a 5-point Likert-type scale that ranged from 1 (unimportant) to 5 (very important) adopted from the ICA audit (Downs & Adrian, 2004).

The descriptive statistics are presented in Table 7.4.

**Table 7.4: Information desired/needed**

Information desired/needed	Level of importance					Mean	Std dev
	Very important	Important	Moderately important	Of little importance	Unimportant		
Q10e. Changes taking place in the Library	64.3% (45)	27.1% (19)	7.1% (5)	–	1.4% (1)	4.53	.76
Q10f. The Library performance	60.0% (39)	32.3% (21)	4.6% (3)	1.5% (1)	1.5% (1)	4.48	.79
Q10b. The Library policies	61.8% (42)	25.0% (17)	11.8% (8)	1.5% (1)	–	4.47	.76
Q10c. Employee benefits	57.8% (37)	29.7% (19)	10.9% (7)	1.6% (1)	–	4.44	.75
Q10a. Requirements of my job	61.2% (41)	20.9% (14)	14.9% (10)	1.5% (1)	1.5% (1)	4.39	.90
Q10g. Personnel news (e.g. new appointments, changes in remuneration packages)	46.3% (31)	26.9% (18)	22.4% (15)	3.0% (2)	1.5% (1)	4.13	.97

Information desired/needed	Level of importance					Mean	Std dev
	Very important	Important	Moderately important	Of little importance	Unimportant		
Q10d. Government affairs/legislation affecting the Library	38.2% (26)	22.1% (15)	30.9% (21)	8.8% (6)	–	3.90	1.02

**(Source: Author's fieldwork)**

All means were close to 4, indicating that the respondents wanted to receive information regularly. The most items with the highest means were changes taking place in the Library and the library performance. About 91.4% (n=64) of the respondents indicated that they needed information on changes taking place in the Library, with a mean of 4.53, which was close to 5 ( $M = 4.53$ ,  $SD = .76$ ). About 92.3% (n=60) indicated they would like to receive information on the performance of the Library more often, with a mean of 4.48 ( $M = 4.48$ ,  $SD = .79$ ). Close to 90%, that is 86.8% (n=59), indicated that they would like to receive information on the library policies, with a mean of 4.47 ( $M = 4.47$ ,  $SD = .76$ ), and 87.5% (n=56) indicated that they would like to receive information on employee benefits, with a mean of 4.44 ( $M = 4.44$ ,  $SD = .75$ ).

The three items, *requirements of my job* ( $M = 4.39$ ,  $SD = .90$ ), *personnel news* ( $M = 4.13$ ,  $SD = .97$ ), and *government action/legislation affecting the Library* ( $M = 3.90$ ,  $SD = 1.02$ ) had the proportion indicating that respondents desired the information at least more often, being 82.1%, 73.2% and 60.1% respectively. It should be noted that the respondents desired to receive information on the three issues, since all of them had at least 60%, indicating that they would either like the information more often or always.

These results indicated that information on personnel news had been identified as both the most received and the most desired. The results were in line with the results of the research conducted by Downs and Adrian (2004).

In terms of information on *requirements of my job* and *government affairs/legislation affecting the Library*, the results were in line with the information theory that promotes the measurement of the amount of information needed or required in the communication system of an organisation to solve the communication problems (Grunig & White 1992; Brillouin 2013; Woodward 2014). Hence, it can be argued that the type of information that addressed the communication context in the Library and needed to be measured included

information on the requirements of my job and information on government affairs/legislation affecting the Library.

#### **7.4.4 Descriptive statistics on sources of information**

The construct on sources of information had nine items assessing it, measured on 5-point Likert-type scale that ranged from 1 (not to any extent at all) to 5 (to a very large extent) adopted from the ICA audit (Downs & Adrian 2004). The information is shown in Table 7.5.

**Table 7.5: Sources of information**

Sources of information	Level of extent					Mean	Std dev
	To a very large extent	To a large extent	To some extent	To a little extent	Not to any extent at all		
Q11b. My immediate supervisor	50.7% (35)	30.4% (21)	13.0% (9)	4.3% (3)	1.4% (1)	4.25	.95
Q11e. Group meetings with my team	30.4% (21)	39.1% (27)	24.6% (17)	4.3% (3)	1.4% (1)	3.93	.93
Q11f. Minutes of meetings	28.8% (19)	30.3% (20)	31.8% (21)	9.1% (6)	–	3.79	.97
Q11d. Co-workers in my unit	18.6% (13)	41.4% (29)	28.6% (20)	10.0% (7)	1.4% (1)	3.66	.95
Q11a. Senior management	11.4% (8)	28.6% (20)	32.9% (23)	24.3% (17)	2.9% (2)	3.21	1.03
Q11g. The grapevine	14.9% (10)	19.4% (13)	26.9% (18)	22.4% (15)	16.4% (11)	2.94	1.30
Q11c. Individuals in other units	4.4% (3)	19.1% (13)	48.5% (33)	20.6% (14)	7.4% (5)	2.93	.94

Sources of information	Level of extent					Mean	Std dev
	To a very large extent	To a large extent	To some extent	To a little extent	Not to any extent at all		
Q11i. The social media (e.g. WhatsApp, SMS or Facebook)	4.5% (3)	20.9% (14)	20.9% (14)	29.9% (20)	23.9% (16)	2.52	1.20
Q11h. My subordinates	3.2% (2)	22.6% (14)	25.8% (16)	17.7% (11)	30.6% (19)	2.50	1.24

(Source: Author's fieldwork)

Looking at Table 7.5, only one item – *my immediate supervisor* – had an average of above 4, indicating that the sources provided information to a very large extent. Four of the items had averages close to 4, indicating that the sources provided information to a large extent. Four items had means close to 3, indicating that the sources provided information to some extent.

About 81.4% (n=56) said that they currently received information to a large extent from their immediate supervisor with a mean of 4.25 ( $M = 4.25$ ,  $SD = .95$ ), while 69.5% (n=48) indicated that they received information from group meetings with their team to at least a large extent with a mean of 3.93 ( $M = 3.93$ ,  $SD = .93$ ). Only 59.1% (n=39) said that they received information from the minutes of meetings to a large extent, with a mean of 3.79 ( $M = 3.79$ ,  $SD = .97$ ) and 60% (n=42) received information from co-workers in their units to at least a large extent, with a mean of 3.66 ( $M = 3.66$ ,  $SD = .95$ ). All the standard deviations were close to 1, indicating that the majority gave ratings between 3 and 5 ( $\pm 1$  standard deviation from the mean).

Only 40% (n=28) indicated that they received information from senior management to a large extent, with a mean of 3.21 ( $M = 3.21$ ,  $SD = .1.03$ ). About 38.8% (n=26) indicated that they received information from the



grapevine to a little extent or not at all, with a mean of 2.94 ( $M = 2.94$ ,  $SD = 1.30$ ) and 28% ( $n=19$ ) received information from individuals in other units to a little extent or not at all, with a mean of 2.93 ( $M = 2.93$ ,  $SD = .94$ ).

However, about 53.8% ( $n=36$ ) indicated that they received information from the social media (e.g. WhatsApp, SMS or Facebook) to a little extent or not at all, with a mean of 2.52 ( $M = 2.52$ ,  $SD = 1.20$ ), and 48.3% ( $n=30$ ) received information from their subordinates to a little extent or not at all, with a mean of 2.50 ( $M = 3.66$ ,  $SD = 1.24$ ).

It can be concluded that the respondents mostly received information from immediate supervisors, group meetings with their team, minutes of the meetings and from co-workers in their unit. On the other hand, the respondents indicated that they received little information from the social media (e.g. WhatsApp, SMS or Facebook) and from their subordinates.

The flow of information from supervisors, co-workers and minutes of meetings was promoted by the excellence theory, which indicates that the symmetrical communication allows managers to coordinate and not to dictate. These findings further supported the findings of a study conducted by Nikolic *et al* (2013), which revealed that employees were satisfied with communication from immediate supervisors. This was contrary to the results of a study conducted by Downs and Adrian (2004) that revealed problems with the communication from management.

#### **7.4.5 Descriptive statistics on feedback on communication sent**

There were six items assessing the construct on feedback on communication sent. The construct was measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale that ranged from 1 (never) to 5 (always), adopted from the ICA audit (Downs & Adrian 2004). The information on the descriptive statistics is presented in Table 7.6.

**Table 7.6: Feedback on communication sent**

Feedback on communication sent	Level of occurrence					Mean	Std dev
	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never		
Q12c. My immediate supervisor	49.3% (33)	34.3% (23)	13.4% (9)	3.0% (2)	–	4.30	.82
Q12d. My immediate work colleagues	37.5% (24)	39.1% (25)	17.2% (11)	4.7% (3)	1.6% (1)	4.06	.94
Q12b. Middle management	17.5% (11)	20.6% (13)	36.5% (23)	19.0% (12)	6.3% (4)	3.24	1.15
Q12e. Other units within the Library	9.8% (6)	21.3% (13)	36.1% (22)	21.3% (13)	11.5% (7)	2.97	1.14
Q12a. Senior management	14.5% (9)	12.9% (8)	30.6% (19)	32.3% (20)	9.7% (6)	2.9	1.20
Q12f. My subordinates	10.3% (6)	17.2% (10)	17.2% (10)	22.4% (13)	32.8% (19)	2.5	1.38

(Source: Author's fieldwork)

The majority of the respondents, 83.6% (n=56) indicated that their immediate supervisor often provided feedback on the communication that they had sent with a mean of 4.30 ( $M = 4.30$ ,  $SD = .82$ ). About 76.6% (n=49) indicated that their immediate work colleagues provided feedback on the communication that they had sent with a mean of 4.06 ( $M = 4.06$ ,  $SD = .94$ ). Only 38.1% (n=24) indicated that the middle management provided feedback on the communication that they had sent with a mean of 3.24 ( $M = 3.24$ ,  $SD = 1.15$ ).

On the other hand, 32.8% (n=20) indicated that other units in the Library rarely or never provided feedback on the communication that they had sent, with a mean of 2.97 ( $M = 2.97$ ,  $SD = 1.14$ ). Forty two percent (42%) (n=26) indicated that senior management rarely or never provided feedback on the communication that they had sent, with a mean of 2.90. ( $M = 2.90$ ,  $SD = 1.20$ ) and 55.2% (n=32) indicating that the respondents rarely or never received

feedback from their subordinates on their communication with them, with a mean of 2.50. ( $M = 2,50$ ,  $SD = 1.38$ ).

In terms of the means in Table 7.6, the analysis showed that all constructs had standard deviations of close to 1. In most of the items, the respondents indicated that they received feedback on communication sent, with the exception of the item on feedback from subordinates. Using the empirical rule, 68.26% of the respondents had ratings between 3 and 5 ( $\pm 1$  standard deviation from the mean).

It can be concluded that the respondents received feedback on the communication that they had sent to their immediate supervisors and colleagues. On the other hand, the respondents indicated that they were not provided with feedback on the communication that they had sent to their subordinates.

Feedback usually took the form of downward communication when management or supervisors gave instructions and information to subordinates; and upwards communication when subordinates provided managers with feedback about daily operational issues, current issues and problems that needed decision-making and the feedback about the effectiveness of downward communication (Hasel 2011; Lunenburg 2010b; Ivancevich, Konopaske & Matteson 2011). The findings of this study contradicted the latter, as respondents indicated that they were not provided with feedback on the communication that they had sent to their subordinates.

The results confirmed the findings of a study conducted at 131 Serbian companies, which revealed that employees were satisfied with feedback from supervisors – i.e. employees preferred to learn from their mistakes and supervisors were willing to listen to complaints from employees (Nikolic *et al* 2013). Subsequently, feedback was identified as an important construct in

integrated internal communication, in that it raised awareness to employees about their mistakes and alerted supervisors about the needs of employees.

#### **7.4.6 *Descriptive statistics on the amount of information received through formal channels of communication***

The construct on the amount of information received through formal channels of communication was assessed by using ten items. The 5-point Likert-type scale, which ranged from 1 (very little information was received) to 5 (very great information was received) was adopted from the ICA audit (Downs & Adrian, 2004). However, there was a fifth category catering for those who did not have access to the channels. The mean was obtained by considering only the respondents who had access to the channel.

The amount of information received through formal channels of communication is shown in Table 7.7, with the top item being the one with the highest mean.

**Table 7.7: Amount of information received through formal channels of communication**

Amount of information received through formal channels of communication	Amount of information obtained					Mean	Std dev
	Very great information was obtained	Great information was obtained	Some information was obtained	Very little information was obtained	I do not have access to this channel		
Q13d. Email	52.3% (34)	24.6% (16)	9.2% (6)	3.1% (2)	10.8% (7)	3.58	.92
Q13e. Info-web	40.0% (26)	33.8% (22)	12.3% (8)	4.6% (3)	9.2% (6)	3.37	.98
Q13g. Lib-com	31.7% (20)	28.6% (18)	12.7% (8)	11.1% (7)	15.9% (10)	3.29	1.21
Q13a. Formal face-to-face conversations (e.g. meetings, briefing sessions, workshops)	36.9% (24)	36.9% (24)	12.3% (8)	7.7% (5)	6.2% (4)	3.22	1.01
Q13b. Written communication (letters, memo's, reports, minutes of meetings, etc.)	40.0% (26)	32.3% (21)	16.9% (11)	6.2% (4)	4.6% (3)	3.20	.99

Amount of information received through formal channels of communication	Amount of information obtained					Mean	Std dev
	Very great information was obtained	Great information was obtained	Some information was obtained	Very little information was obtained	I do not have access to this channel		
Q13f. Newsletter	18.8% (12)	35.9% (23)	15.6% (10)	20.3% (13)	9.4% (6)	2.81	1.23
Q13c. Telephone	20.0% (13)	26.2% (17)	32.3% (21)	18.5% (12)	3.1% (2)	2.57	1.10
Q13h. Skype	11.3% (7)	9.7% (6)	8.1% (5)	48.4% (30)	22.6% (14)	2.52	1.69
Q13i. Central Information repository (G-Drive)	8.2% (5)	11.5% (7)	19.7% (12)	39.3% (24)	21.3% (13)	2.52	1.59
Q13j. Bulletin boards	9.7% (6)	11.3% (7)	17.7% (11)	45.2% (28)	16.1% (10)	2.34	1.53

(Source: Author's fieldwork)

About 76.9% (n=50) of the respondents indicated that they received great information from the emails with a mean of 3.58 ( $M = 3.58$ ,  $SD = .92$ ), while 73.8% (n=48) indicated that they received great information through the Info-web with a mean of 3.37 ( $M = 3.37$ ,  $SD = .98$ ). About 60.3% (n=38) received great information from Lib-com with a mean of 3.29 ( $M = 3.29$ ,  $SD = 1.21$ ) and 73.8% (n=48) indicated that they received great information from formal face-to-face conversations (e.g. meetings, briefing sessions, workshops) with a mean of 3.22 ( $M = 3.22$ ,  $SD = 1.01$ ). The results indicated that 72.3% (n=47) received great information from written communication (letters, memos, reports, minutes of meetings, etc.) with a mean of 3.20 ( $M = 3.20$ ,  $SD = .99$ ) and 54.7% (n=35) indicated that they received great information from the newsletter with a mean of 2.81 ( $M = 2.81$ ,  $SD = 1.23$ ). The channels with less than 50% of the responses provide employees with less information and those included the telephone, Skype, central information repository and bulletin boards, with proportions of 46.2%, 21%, 19.7% and 21% respectively.

The items *Skype* ( $M = 2.52$ ,  $SD = 1.69$ ), *central information repository (G-Drive)* ( $M = 2.52$ ,  $SD = 1.59$ ) and *bulletin boards* ( $M = 2.34$ ,  $SD = 1.53$ ) had more than 50% of the respondents indicating that they received some information or little information. The proportions were 71%, 60.6% and 61.3% respectively.

It can be concluded that the respondents received great information from email, info-web, lib-com and face-to-face conversations. On the other hand, respondents received little information from Skype, G-Drive and bulletin boards. This was in line with the results obtained through the formal channels of communication used in the Library explored during the qualitative study. The following channels were identified as the most used as listed in a chronological order: email, info-web, lib-com, formal face-to-face conversations (e.g. meetings, briefing sessions, workshops) and written communication (letters, memo's, reports, minutes of meetings, etc.).

These findings were also in line with the results of studies conducted by Pipas and Sirbu (2015) and Hasel (2011), who identified email as a prominent and cost-effective channel that influences internal communication, builds long-lasting relationships and is characterised by information richness. The results further confirmed the richness of face-to-face communication, as identified by Cheney *et al* (2011) and Ivancevich, Konopaske and Matteson (2011) in the ranking of channels in order of richness.

The results were, therefore, supported by the media richness theory that identifies face-to-face communication as the richest medium that facilitates immediate feedback and the organisational symmetrical communication (Ishii 2005; Men 2014; Hasel 2011; Ivancevich, Konopaske & Matteson 2011). The results also confirmed the findings of the studies conducted by the following researchers, who identified face-to-face communication as an important construct for internal communication audits: Downs and Hazen (1977); Woldearegay (2013); Nikolic *et al* (2013) and Tsai, Chuang and Hsieh (2009).

In terms of written communication, the results showed this channel providing employees with great information, which was in line with Hasel's (2011) recommendations, which identified written communication as an unavoidable channel that allows access to information long after it has been received; builds trust relationships between subordinates and supervisors; and is used to transmit and store organisational policies.

#### ***7.4.7 Descriptive statistics on the amount of information received through informal channels of communication***

There were nine items assessing the construct on the amount of information received through informal channels of communication. The items were measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale, which ranged from 1 (very little information was received) to 5 (very great information was received), was



adopted from the ICA audit (Downs & Adrian 2004). The fifth category was for those who did not have access to the channel.

The mean was obtained by considering only the respondents who did have access to the channel.

The information is tabulated in Table 7.8, with the top item being the one with the highest mean.

**Table 7.8: Amount of information received through informal channels of communication**

Amount of information received through informal channels of communication	Amount of information obtained					Mean	Std dev
	Very great information was obtained	Great information was obtained	Some information was obtained	Very little information was obtained	I do not have access to this channel		
Q14a. Informal face-to-face conversations	36.4% (24)	22.7% (15)	22.7% (15)	10.6% (7)	7.6% (5)	3.08	1.15
Q14h. Grapevine	19.0% (12)	11.1% (7)	19.0% (12)	38.1% (24)	12.7% (8)	2.49	1.48
Q14d. SMS	16.4% (10)	21.3% (13)	26.2% (16)	29.5% (18)	6.6% (4)	2.44	1.26
Q14e. Facebook	16.4% (10)	16.4% (10)	24.6% (15)	36.1% (22)	6.6% (4)	2.33	1.30
Q14f. MySpace	3.4% (2)	10.2% (6)	11.9% (7)	52.5% (31)	22.0% (13)	2.31	1.64
Q14c. WhatsApp	8.2% (5)	21.3% (13)	21.3% (13)	39.3% (24)	9.8% (6)	2.28	1.33
Q14g. Instant messenger	6.6% (4)	8.2% (5)	11.5% (7)	55.7% (34)	18.0% (11)	2.20	1.59

Amount of information received through informal channels of communication	Amount of information obtained					Mean	Std dev
	Very great information was obtained	Great information was obtained	Some information was obtained	Very little information was obtained	I do not have access to this channel		
Q14b. Twitter	3.3% (2)	18.0% (11)	21.3% (13)	45.9% (28)	11.5% (7)	2.13	1.38
Q14i. Instagram	3.3% (2)	8.2% (5)	8.2% (5)	60.7% (37)	19.7% (12)	2.13	1.62

(Source: Author's fieldwork)

About 59.1% (n=39) indicated that they received great information from informal face-to-face conversations with a mean of 3.08 ( $M = 3.08$ ,  $SD = 1.15$ ). The informal channels like grapevine, SMS, Facebook, MySpace, WhatsApp, instant messenger, Twitter and Instagram had less than 50% of the respondents indicating that they received some information. The proportions were 30.1%, 37.7%, 32.8%, 13.6%, 29.5%, 14.8%, 21.3% and 11.5% respectively.

However, the majority of the respondents, that is about 52.5% (n=31), indicated that they received very little information through Myspace, with an average of 2.31 ( $M = 2.31$ ,  $SD = 1.64$ ); 55.7% (n=34) received very little information through instant messenger, with a mean of 2.20 ( $M = 2.20$ ,  $SD = 1.59$ ); 60.7% (n=37) received very little information through Instagram, with a mean of 2.13 ( $M = 2.13$ ,  $SD = 1.62$ ). Looking at Table 7.8, respondents received great amount of information through informal face-to-face conversations.

The findings were similar to the studies involving the informational construct discussed in Chapter 2 of this study, which indicated that effective organisations need horizontal or informal communication for the coordination and integration of diverse organisational functions (Cowan 2017; Cheney *et al* 2011).

The results were also in line with the media richness theory that identifies channels such as informal face-to-face conversation as a rich and natural medium that provides satisfaction. The results were further supported by studies conducted by Pipas and Sîrbu (2015); Woldearegay (2013); Men (2014) and Cheney *et al* (2011) that indicate that individuals preferred channels that offered media richness, such as face-to-face conversation. This was contrary to the findings of the studies conducted by Downs and Adrian (2004) and Abdollahi *et al* (2010), which revealed that employees often wanted less information to come to them through informal channels. Channels such as the grapevine were identified as barriers to communication, as they can harm the satisfaction of employees.

#### **7.4.8 Descriptive statistics on the relational construct**

The relational construct focused on internal communication relationships in the Library. The construct was assessed by using eight items measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale that ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), adopted from the CSQ (Meintjes & Steyn 2006).

The items are presented in Table 7.9.

**Table 7.9: Relational construct**

Relational constructs	Level of agreement					Mean	Std dev
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
Q15a. Reporting lines/channels are clear	8.6% (6)	58.6% (41)	7.1% (5)	7.1% (5)	18.6% (13)	3.31	1.29
Q15e. I encourage my subordinates to read the available information to enhance their skills	8.6% (5)	44.8% (26)	32.8 (19)	1.7% (1)	12.1% (7)	3.36	1.09
Q15g. I use horisontal communication to facilitate requests for information from my co-workers	4.7% (3)	46.9% (30)	34.4% (22)	4.7% (3)	9.4% (6)	3.33	.99
Q15h. I trust my co-workers	4.5% (3)	46.3% (31)	31.3% (21)	10.4% (7)	7.5% (5)	3.3	.99
Q15d. My subordinates are receptive to discussions	7.0% (4)	36.8% (21)	36.8% (21)	3.5% (2)	15.8% (9)	3.16	1.15
Q15b. My subordinates are responsive to downward directive	6.8% (4)	33.9% (20)	39.0% (23)	–	20.3% (12)	3.07	1.20
Q15c. My subordinates feel responsible for initiating	8.8% (5)	26.3% (15)	42.1% (24)	7.0% (4)	15.8% (9)	3.05	1.16

Relational constructs	Level of agreement					Mean	Std dev
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
accurate upward communication							
Q15f. Grapevine information e is accurate	3.3% (2)	30.0% (18)	33.3% (20)	16.7% (10)	16.7% (10)	2.87	1.13

(Source: Author's fieldwork)

There were four items with the level of agreement of more than 50%. The items were assessed as follows: 67.2% (n=47) of the respondents agreed that the reporting lines/channels were clear with a mean of 3.31 ( $M = 3.31$ ,  $SD = 1.29$ ); about 53.4% (n=31) agreed that they encouraged their subordinates to read the available information to enhance their skills with a mean of 3.36 ( $M = 3.36$ ,  $SD = 1.09$ ); 51.6% (n=33) agreed that they used horizontal communication to facilitate requests for information from their co-workers with a mean of 3.33 ( $M = 3.33$ ,  $SD = .99$ ); and 50.8% (n=34) agreed that they trusted their co-workers with a mean of 3.30 ( $M = 3.30$ ,  $SD = .99$ ).

Less than 50% of the respondents agreed to the following issues: 43.8% (n=25) agreed that their subordinates were receptive to discussions; 40.7% (n=24) agreed that their subordinates were responsive to downward directive; 35.1% (n=20) agreed that their subordinates felt responsible for initiating accurate upward communication; and 33.3% (n=20) agreed that the information received through the grapevine was accurate.

It can be concluded that the respondents agreed that relationships in the Library were influenced by clear reporting lines/channels; the use of horizontal communication to facilitate requests for information from their co-workers; trusting co-workers; and encouraging subordinates to read the available information to enhance their skills. However, in terms of the last 4 items, the levels of agreement were marginal – i.e. close to 50%.

The results were supported by a study conducted by Wagner (2013) of which the findings revealed employees being satisfied with symmetrical communication between supervisor and subordinate and dissatisfied with lack of two-way communication. The results were also in line with the excellence theory that promotes two-way symmetrical communication to build long-term relationships between stakeholders in the organisation (Grunig 2013).



#### **7.4.9 Descriptive statistics on informational/relational construct**

The construct on informational/relational focused on information (feedback) and relationships (with supervisor) taking place in the Library. The construct was assessed by using nine items measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale that ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), adopted from the CSQ (Meintjes & Steyn 2006), as shown in Table 7.10.

**Table 7.10: Level of agreement on informational/relational construct**

Level of agreement on informational/ relational	Level of agreement					Mean	Std dev
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
Q16b. My supervisor alerts me when I make mistakes	11.4% (8)	70.0% (49)	10.0% (7)	2.9% (2)	5.7% (4)	3.79	.90
Q16a. My supervisor listens to me	12.9% (9)	64.3% (45)	11.4% (8)	4.3% (3)	7.1% (5)	3.71	1.00
Q16c. I trust my supervisor	11.6% (8)	56.5% (39)	20.3% (14)	5.8% (4)	5.8% (4)	3.62	.97
Q16d. I receive constructive feedback from my supervisor on my performance appraisal	17.4% (12)	53.6% (37)	11.6% (8)	5.8% (4)	11.6% (8)	3.59	1.19
Q16e. The Library encourages continuous staff development through talent management programmes	7.4% (5)	47.1% (32)	33.8% (23)	1.5% (1)	10.3% (7)	3.4	1.02
Q16f. The Library's communication makes me to identify with the	9.0% (6)	32.8% (22)	41.8% (28)	9.0% (6)	7.5% (5)	3.27	1.01

Level of agreement on informational/ relational	Level of agreement					Mean	Std dev
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
institution							
Q16g. Regular communication from management creates an atmosphere of trust in the Library	5.9% (4)	35.3% (24)	35.3% (24)	14.7% (10)	8.8% (6)	3.15	1.04
Q16i. Communication practices are flexible to suit organisational emergencies	3.0% (2)	37.3% (25)	34.3% (23)	13.4% (9)	11.9% (8)	3.06	1.06
Q16h. The attitude toward communication at the Library is basically healthy	5.9% (4)	32.4% (22)	32.4% (22)	19.1% (13)	10.3% (7)	3.04	1.09

**(Source: Author's fieldwork)**

The item that states that, their supervisor alerted them when they made mistakes had a score of 81.4% (n=57), where the respondents agreed, with a mean of 3.79 which is close to four ( $M = 3.79$ ,  $SD = .9$ ). About 77.2% (n=54) agreed that their supervisor listened to them with an average of 3.71 ( $M = 3.71$ ,  $SD = 1.00$ ). The items *I trust my supervisor* ( $M = 3.62$ ,  $SD = .97$ ) and *I receive constructive feedback from my supervisor on my performance appraisal* ( $M = 3.59$ ,  $SD = 1.19$ ) had 68.1% and 70% in agreement respectively. More than half of the respondents (54.5%) agreed that the Library encouraged continuous staff development through talent management programmes with a mean of 3.40 ( $M = 3.40$ ,  $SD = 1.02$ ).

The other issues had less than 50% of the respondents agreed on the following issues:

- The Library's communication makes me to identify with the institution (41.8%) (n=28);
- Regular communication from management creates an atmosphere of trust in the Library (41.2%) (n=28);
- Communication practices are flexible to suit organisational emergencies (40.3%) (n=27); and
- The attitudes toward communication at the Library is basically health (38.3%) (n=26).

Respondents tended to agree that their supervisor alerted them when they made mistakes; their supervisor listened to them; they trusted their supervisor; they received constructive feedback from their supervisor on their performance appraisal; and that the Library encouraged continuous staff development through talent management programmes. In summary, the information and support provided by supervisors to subordinates built long-lasting relationship. This was in line with the excellence theory that indicates that two-way symmetrical communication building relationships between employees in an organisation.

The results were also in line with a study conducted by Daniela and Janetta (2015) that confirmed that trust relationships are developed when supervisors and employees share opinions, suggestions, expectations related to work and complaints.

Studies conducted by Downs and Adrian (2004); Meintjes and Steyn (2006); Abdullah and Hui (2014) further confirmed the results by identifying the supervisor as the communication link between employees and the organisation. It can be argued that supervisors need to present themselves as good agents of the organisation in their communication with employees, as that determines the commitment of an employee to the organisation.

#### ***7.4.10 Descriptive statistics on organisational outcomes construct***

The construct of organisational outcomes was assessed by using seven items measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale that ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), adopted from the ICA audit (Downs & Adrian 2004).

The descriptive statistics are tabulated in Table 7.11.

**Table 7.11: Level of agreement on organisational outcomes construct**

Level of agreement on organisational outcomes construct	Level of agreement					Mean	Std dev
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
Q17a. I get recognition for outstanding achievements	5.7% (4)	55.7% (39)	18.6% (13)	11.4% (8)	8.6% (6)	3.39	1.05
Q17d. I am informed of my progress in the Library up to this point in time	5.8% (4)	47.8% (33)	26.1% (18)	14.5% (10)	5.8% (4)	3.33	1.00
Q17c. I am given an opportunity to “make a difference” - contribute to the overall success of the Library	8.7% (6)	40.6% (28)	29.0% (20)	14.5% (10)	7.2% (5)	3.29	1.06
Q17b. I get regular updates on the Library’s achievement of objectives	4.4% (3)	45.6% (31)	26.5% (18)	14.7% (10)	8.8% (6)	3.22	1.05
Q17g. I get regular updates on the Library’s overall quality of service	4.3% (3)	40.6% (28)	18.8% (13)	21.7% (15)	14.5% (10)	2.99	1.18
Q17f. I am informed of the Library’s overall communicative efforts	5.9% (4)	26.5% (18)	32.4% (22)	23.5% (16)	11.8% (8)	2.91	1.10

Level of agreement on organisational outcomes construct	Level of agreement					Mean	Std dev
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
Q17e. I am informed of my chances for “getting ahead” or promotion in the Library	3.0% (2)	19.4% (13)	29.9% (20)	22.4% (15)	25.4% (17)	2.52	1.16

**(Source: Author’s fieldwork)**

Most of the items assessed in this construct had averages close to 3, indicating that respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. About 61.4% (n=43) agreed that they did get recognition for outstanding achievements with a mean of 3.39 ( $M = 3.39, SD = 1.05$ ). More than half, 53.6% (n=37), agreed that they were informed of their progress in the Library up to this point in time, with a mean of 3.33 ( $M = 3.33, SD = 1.00$ ). 49.3% (n=34) agreed that they were given an opportunity to make a difference or contribute to the overall success of the Library, with a mean of 3.29 ( $M = 3.29, SD = 1.06$ ). Fifty percent (50%) agreed that they received regular updates on the Library's achievement of objectives, with a mean of 3.22 ( $M = 3.22, SD = 1.05$ ). All standard deviations were close to one, indicating that the majority gave ratings between 3 and 5 ( $\pm 1$  standard deviation from the mean).

The other items had means below 50%. These were: I get regular updates on the Library's overall quality of service (44.9%) (n=31); I am informed of the Library's overall communicative efforts (32%) (n=22); and I am informed of my chances for "getting ahead" or being promoted in the Library (22.4%) (n=15).

It should be noted from the results that the respondents agreed that they did get recognition for outstanding achievements; were informed of their progress in the Library up to this point in time; and that they did receive regular updates on the Library's achievement of objectives.

The results were in line with the excellence theory that promotes the directional flow of information, in which information flows downwards from top management to employees at the lower level (Grunig 2013).

The studies conducted by Abdullah and Hui (2014) and Nikolic *et al* (2013) confirmed that employees should receive regular information about organisational performance, such as information on organisational goals and objectives; plans for the future; achieved results and organisational perspective, as that will enhance their communication satisfaction.



#### ***7.4.11 Descriptive statistics on organisational culture construct***

The construct of organisational culture was assessed by using 19 items measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale that ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), adapted from the organisational culture survey (Denison, Nieminen & Kotrba 2014).

The descriptive statistics are presented in Table 7.12.

**Table 7.12: Organisational culture construct**

Organisational culture construct	Level of agreement					Mean	Std dev
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
Q18f. I participate in staff meetings that are held on a regular basis	12.1% (8)	57.6% (38)	16.7% (11)	9.1% (6)	4.5% (3)	3.64	.97
Q18n. The Library accommodates the communication needs of people with disabilities such as audio equipment	7.5% (5)	55.2% (37)	22.4% (15)	6.0% (4)	9.0% (6)	3.46	1.04
Q18l. I make sure that information services are customised to the specific needs of an individual client	10.8% (7)	44.6% (29)	29.2% (19)	9.2% (6)	6.2% (4)	3.45	1.02
Q18a. The Library values as contained in the Service Charter were clearly communicated to me	7.2% (5)	50.7% (35)	26.1% (18)	7.2% (5)	8.7% (6)	3.41	1.03

Organisational culture construct	Level of agreement					Mean	Std dev
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
Q18s. People I work with function as a team	7.4% (5)	57.4% (39)	13.2% (9)	10.3% (7)	11.8% (8)	3.38	1.15
Q18g. I have a say in decisions that affect my work	10.6% (7)	43.9% (29)	25.8% (17)	9.1% (6)	10.6% (7)	3.35	1.13
Q18c. People I work with are honest with each other	5.8% (4)	39.1% (27)	34.8% (24)	14.5% (10)	5.8% (4)	3.25	.97
Q18o. The Library staff complement is representative of the Library demographic population	7.5% (5)	32.8% (22)	40.3% (27)	11.9% (8)	7.5% (5)	3.21	1.01
Q18r. The Library treats people in a consistent manner, regardless of their cultural differences	4.5% (3)	43.3% (29)	28.4% (19)	13.4% (9)	10.4% (7)	3.18	1.07
Q18b. People in the Library promote the construct of Ubuntu by respecting each other's	1.5% (1)	44.1% (30)	29.4% (20)	14.7% (10)	10.3% (7)	3.12	1.03

Organisational culture construct	Level of agreement					Mean	Std dev
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
culture							
Q18m. The Library informs employees about employment equity initiatives on a regular basis	6.1% (4)	36.4% (24)	27.3% (18)	22.7% (15)	7.6% (5)	3.11	1.07
Q18p. The Library management profile is representative of the Library demographic population	4.5% (3)	31.8% (21)	40.9% (27)	12.1% (8)	10.6% (7)	3.08	1.03
Q18q. The Library communication system recognises the diversity of employees	–	41.2% (28)	29.4% (20)	17.6% (12)	11.8% (8)	3	1.04
Q18h. The Library frequently tries new innovative ideas to improve the communication system	3.0% (2)	32.8% (22)	34.3% (23)	19.4% (13)	10.4% (7)	2.99	1.04

Organisational culture construct	Level of agreement					Mean	Std dev
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
Q18i. When changes are made in the Library, the reasons why are made clear	4.5% (3)	29.9% (20)	34.3% (23)	20.9% (14)	10.4% (7)	2.97	1.06
Q18j. I receive information on government legislation that affects the Library	4.5% (3)	29.9% (20)	26.9% (18)	25.4% (17)	13.4% (9)	2.87	1.13
Q18k. In the Library, adaptive ways are created to meet the changing needs of government	4.6% (3)	20.0% (13)	38.5% (25)	24.6% (16)	12.3% (8)	2.8	1.05
Q18e. The Library values the ideas of employees at lower levels	7.4% (5)	19.1% (13)	35.3% (24)	20.6% (14)	17.6% (12)	2.78	1.17
Q18d. I feel that Library management cares about its staff (they seek to develop employee's full	4.4% (3)	17.6% (12)	38.2% (26)	25.0% (17)	14.7% (10)	2.72	1.06

(Source: Author's fieldwork)

The majority of respondents, 69.7% (n=46) agreed that they participated in staff meetings that were held on a regular basis, with a mean of 3.64 ( $M = 3.64$ ,  $SD = .97$ ). About 62.7% (n=42) agreed that the Library accommodated the communication needs of people with disabilities, such as audio equipment, with a mean of 3.46 ( $M = 3.46$ ,  $SD = 1.04$ ), 55.4% (n=36) agreed that they made sure that information services were customised to the specific needs of an individual client with a mean of 3.45 ( $M = 3.45$ ,  $SD = 1.02$ ). About 57.9% (n=40) agreed that the Library values as contained in the Service Charter were clearly communicated to them with a mean of 3.41 ( $M = 3.41$ ,  $SD = 1.03$ ), 64.8% (n=44) agreed that the people they worked with function as a team with a mean of 3.38 ( $M = 3.38$ ,  $SD = 1.15$ ) and 54.5% (n=36) agreed that they had a say in decisions that affect their work with a mean of 3.35 ( $M = 3.35$ ,  $SD = 1.13$ )

All other items had agreement below 50%. These were: People I work with are honest with each other (44.9%) (n=31); the Library staff complement is representative of the Library demographic population (40.3%) (n=27); people in the Library promote Ubuntu by respecting each other's culture (45.6%) (n=31); the Library informs employees about employment equity initiatives on a regular basis (42.5%) (n=28); the Library management profile is representative of the Library demographic population (36.3%) (n=24); the Library communication system recognises the diversity of employees (41.2%) (n=28); the Library frequently tries new innovative ideas to improve the communication stem (35.8%) (n=24); When changes are made in the Library, the reasons why are made clear (35.4%) (n=23); I receive information on government legislation that affects the Library (35.4%) (n=23); in the Library, adaptive ways are created to meet the changing needs of government (24.6%) (n=16); the Library values the ideas of employees at lower level (26.5%) (n=18); and I feel that Library management cares about its staff (they seek to develop employee's full) (22%) (n=15).

In conclusion, it could be argued that the respondents agreed that they participated in staff meetings that were held on a regular basis; the Library

accommodated the communication needs of people with disabilities such as audio equipments; they made sure that information services were customised to the specific needs of an individual client, the Library values as contained in the Service Charter were clearly communicated to them; the people they work with functioned as a team and that they had a say in decisions that affect their work.

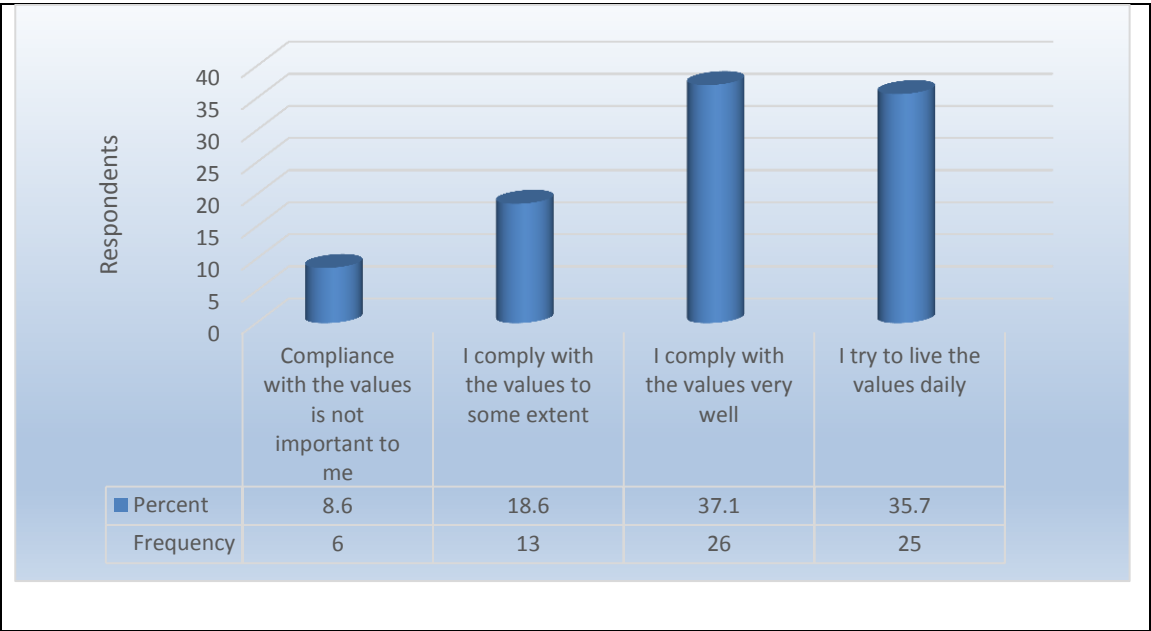
It can be posited that, in the respondents' view, the Library as an organisation took care of them and their needs by communicating the Library values, involving them in decisions-making; promoting their participation in activities; promoting diversity by accommodating the communication needs of people with disabilities; promoting the customisation of services; and creating a healthy working environment that make them work as a team.

The results were in line with the excellence theory that recognises issues of organisational structure, culture, systems of internal communication, gender, diversity power and activism. This theory further posites that the organisation must respect and recognise the contribution made by employees in the organisation (Grunig 2013). The results also confirmed to what Carvalho (2013) regarded as the focus of the organisational culture survey, that is, to measure employees' perception of the organisation, as it relates to internal communication. In this study, participants were free to raise their opinion on the communication taking place in the Library. A study conducted by Daniela and Janetta (2015) also confirmed that internal communication was influenced by perceptions of employees.

The results were further confirmed by studies conducted by the following researchers: Gray and Laidlaw (2004); Meintjes and Steyn (2006); Mao and Hale (2015); Jensen, Papastefanou and Conradie (2013); Woldearegay (2013) and Steele and Plenty (2014), who identified the construct of organisational culture as useful in auditing internal communication and addressing communication challenges resulting from the political environments and the diversity in the cultures of employees.

The qualitative findings concurred with the following best practices: employees voluntarily customising the information needs of their internal clients and the Library encouraging the sharing of knowledge between new and experienced employees who are retiring. However, the Library also played a role in accommodating the communication needs of employees with disabilities, although the employment equity targets were not yet achieved, as reflected in the 2016 Annual Report.

The respondents were asked whether they complied with the Library values and the results are shown in Figure 7.1.



**Figure 7.1: Bar chart showing compliance with the Library values (Source: Author’s fieldwork)**

From Figure 7.1, it can be noted that 37.1% (n=26) of the respondents indicated that they complied with the values very well, while 35.7% (n=25) indicated that they tried to live the values daily. The findings of the qualitative study indicated that employees were aware of the Library values and that their attitude towards the internal communication of the Library was acceptable. Compliance level



was estimated at 90%. The Mukleuneck Campus of the Unisa Library also displayed literature on vision, mission and business values.

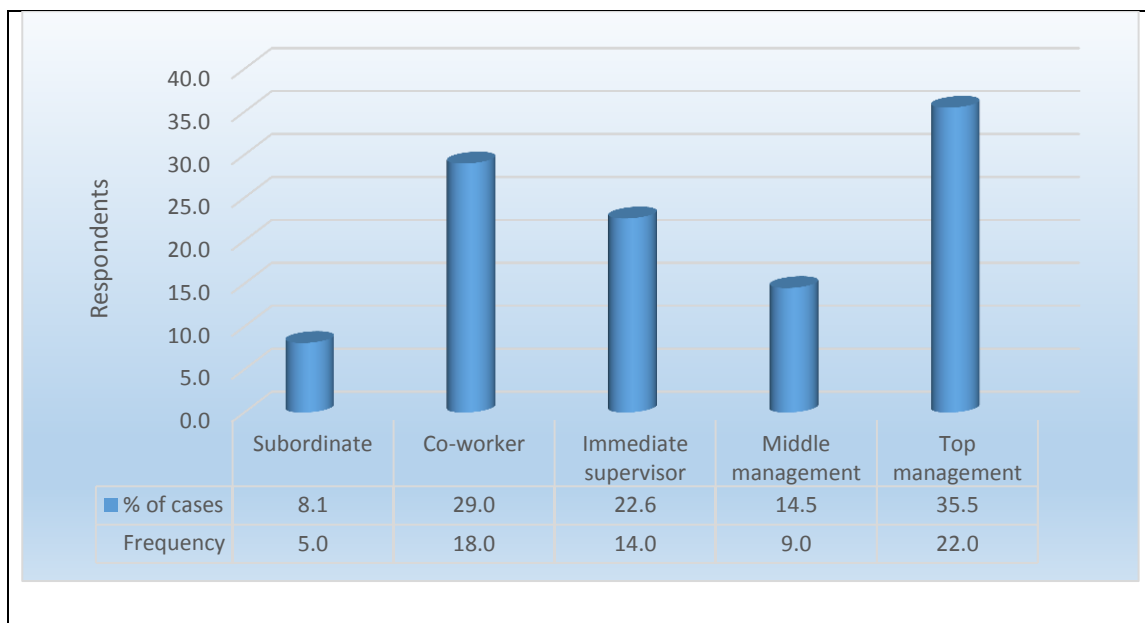
The results were also in line with the study conducted by Priola and Hurrel (2011), who indicated that organisational culture cannot be dictated by executive management, but is rooted in the beliefs, values, expectations and meanings shared by employees. The results of this study presented the opinions of employees which reflect their beliefs, values, expectations and shared meaning that cannot be dictated by management in the Library.

#### ***7.4.12 Descriptive statistics on communication experience construct***

The communication experience construct was adopted from the CIT. The questions focused on the identification of the communication experiences; the level of effectiveness of the communication experiences; description of positive and negative communication experiences; and the comments on how to improve the internal communication of the Library (Carvalho 2013).

##### **7.4.12.1 Identification of communication experiences**

The respondents were asked to identify their communication experiences, either positive or negative and the person to whom the experience relates to. This was a multiple-choice question. A total of 62 responses were received, as shown in Figure 7.2.



**Figure 7.2: Bar chart showing communication experiences of respondents**  
(Source: Author's fieldwork)

From Figure 7.2, it could be concluded that the experiences primarily related to top management, co-workers and immediate supervisors.

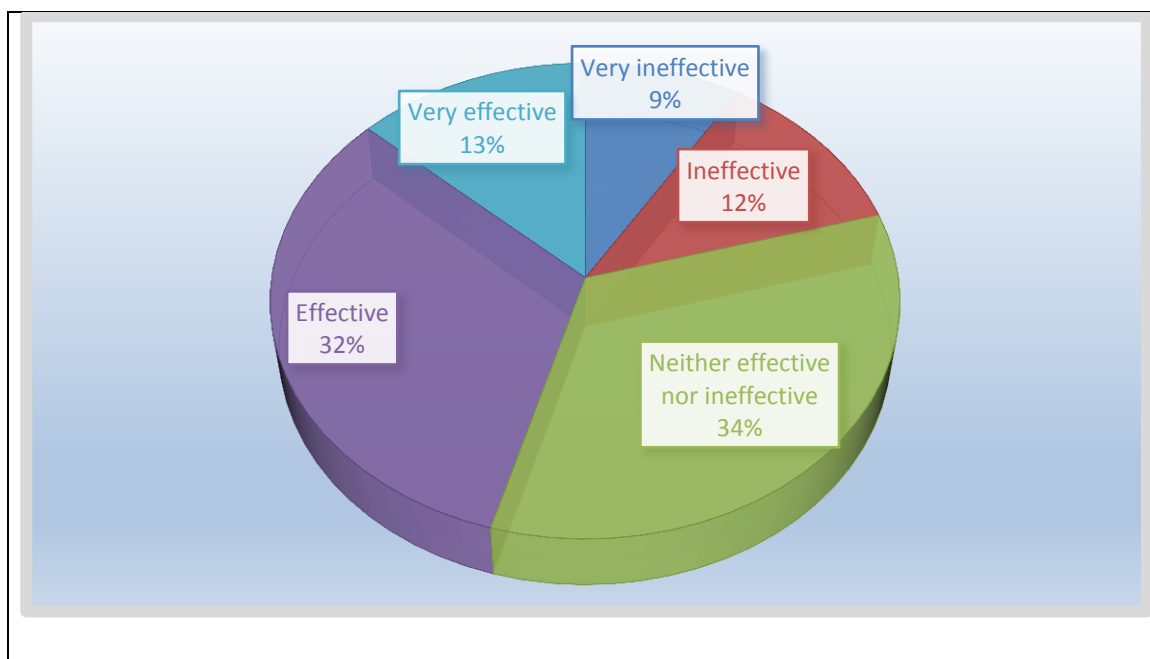
This was in line with the arguments made in Chapter 2 on the existing theoretical framework that promotes the excellence theory by indicating that employees, who are provided with sufficient information and are involved in their work, commit in a long-term relationship and they are likely to defend their organisation and less likely to spread malicious content and rumours as compared to disgruntled employees, who represent a threat to the organisation (Stredwick 2014; Men 2014; Fill 2013). This is contrary to Robbins' *et al* (2009) assertions, in which grapevine occupies 75% of information flow in organisations and is perceived by most employees as more reliable than formal communication from executive management.

In addition, the qualitative study revealed the need for more, timeous, transparent and continuous communication. The general lack of communication from top management on changes taking place in the Library created contradictory messages to clients and that managers imposed their views on

subordinates. Less communication from management will also result in rumours.

#### 7.4.12.2 The level of effectiveness of the communication experiences

The respondents were asked to indicate the level of effectiveness on the quality of communication in the Library from their own experience. The information is shown in Figure 7.3.



**Figure 7.3: Pie chart showing the level of effectiveness on the quality of communication in the Library (Source: Author's fieldwork)**

About 34% indicated that there was neither effective nor ineffective communication; 32% indicated that communication was effective, 13% very effective; 12% ineffective and 9% very ineffective. Therefore, only 45% indicated that the quality of communication in the Library was effective.

The results were in line with the excellence theory that is recognised as a driving force behind effective communication, which is based on the four elements of the communication process: the source of information, the

message, the medium or channels and the feedback (Hasel 2011; Cheney *et al* 2011).

The results obtained in item 7.3.6 earlier in this chapter on information received through formal channels of communication confirmed the effectiveness of communication through face-to-face meetings, info-web, written communication, lib-com, and the newsletter as the most effective communication channels in the Unisa Library.

#### **7.4.12.3 Description of positive and negative communication experiences**

The respondents were asked to describe any positive and negative internal communication experiences that they had encountered. This was a multiple-response question in which an individual could give more than one comment. The following comments were obtained:

**Table 7.13: Description of positive and negative communication experiences (n=38)**

<b>Communication experience</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% of cases</b>
There is info-web that is used to inform Library staff about urgent matters, and not only problems	5	13.20%
Nothing you say as a staff member is taken into consideration	4	10.50%
No communication at all	4	10.50%
Communication is very good	3	7.90%
My supervisor's communication is effective and clear	2	5.30%
Poor communication between us and other directorates in the Library	2	5.30%
Introduction of new developments to staff are not well articulated	2	5.30%
The communication with the online resources and the functioning of the system is very effective	2	5.30%

<b>Communication experience</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% of cases</b>
Communication about certain activities has been poor (e.g renovations)	2	5.30%
Lack of communication on the problems experienced with the air conditioners	2	5.30%
Not being informed of the new management appointments until the last days	1	2.60%
Alerts on important events are communicated through intercom	1	2.60%
Communication is not good most of the time and that is a bad habit	1	2.60%
Staff meetings need to be prioritised by top management	1	2.60%
Staff meetings are open and staff are free to speak	1	2.60%
Top management communicate with line staff without consulting with their managers – protocol problems	1	2.60%
Library Management Team (LMT) meetings are held monthly and very little deliberation on issues take place	1	2.60%
The personnel news, it put us at a level of understanding what our staff members are going through	1	2.60%
No feedback on performance and goals reached	1	2.60%
Lack of transparency on Mvusuludzo Project and on how it affects us	1	2.60%
Communication from top management is very minimal	1	2.60%
Immediate supervisors carry too much responsibilities	1	2.60%
Lack of timeous reporting of information	1	2.60%
Communication happens everywhere when staff members have achieved anything from an effective qualification	1	2.60%
We use emails most of the time to communicate, and anything else is communicated through WhatsApp group	1	2.60%

Communication experience	Frequency	% of cases
The new Executive Director (ED) has tried to be honest about the current situation in the Library	1	2.60%
Sudden budget cuts, total uncertainty about KPMG redevelopment project	1	2.60%
The information sessions were conducted by our new ED to familiarise herself with who we are.	1	2.60%
Meetings chaired by senior management are supposed to occur quarterly, but regularly get cancelled	1	2.60%
No general newsletter to clients	1	2.60%
No systematic minute taking and minutes are not available on central website	1	2.60%
E-notice is a working tool and very valuable	1	2.60%
New UNISA web page infrastructure can be better utilised for internal communication	1	2.60%
No	1	2.60%

**(Source: Author's fieldwork)**

The communication experiences brought up by at least 10% of the respondents were negative. They indicated communication as poor, minimal, not good or lacking and that the views of staff members were not taken into consideration. There was also a lack of feedback and transparency on minutes of meetings, activities and goals achieved. The protocol was not observed. Although it was indicated that there was no communication by a few, some of the respondents recognised online communication, such as email, info-web and E-notice, as valuable mechanisms for interaction with staff.

The results were confirmed by studies conducted by the following researchers: Clampitt and Downs (1987); Quinn and Hargie (2004) and Downs and Adrian (2004), who indicated that employees desire more information; want access to important information; want action on information passed; want access to superiors and explanation of policies. Problems were also experienced with

communication from management; hence it was posited that the information theory should be applied to promote the flow of information.

Results were also confirmed by a study conducted in South Africa by Nhapo (2000), who identified the following gaps in the communication system of the Department of Communication: lack of organised communication structure and medium; poor information sharing between supervisors and subordinates; and the lack of information on departmental changes and developments. Supervisors felt disempowered due to lack of communication about the department. Wagner (2013) further identified the lack of information on government.

The results of the quantitative study were contrary to the results of the qualitative study, where managers indicated that the email and info-web were accessible and must be used.

#### ***7.4.12.4 Comments on how to improve the internal communication***

The respondents were asked to make comments on how to improve the internal communication of the Library. A total of 31 employees responded to the question. It was a multiple response question. The information is shown in Table 7.14.

**Table 7.14: Comments on how to improve the internal communication (n=31)**

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% of cases</b>
No comment	8	25.80%
If top management can be considerate and listen to lower level staff members and avoid taking decisions on our behalf	4	12.90%
Train our management to listen to the concerns of staff members	3	9.70%
Round table meetings at directorate level of the Library	3	9.70%

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% of cases</b>
Allow for the flow of communication and avoid making decisions on our behalf	2	6.50%
Transparency and accountability among all staff members	2	6.50%
Improving the internal communication	2	6.50%
Revive the Library Intranet, encourage knowledge sharing activities and invest in a knowledge sharing system	2	6.50%
Improving the working environment; i.e. repairing the printers and the aircon systems	1	3.20%
The current level of communication is sufficient	1	3.20%
Set proper communication protocols communicate it and stick to it	1	3.20%
Adhere to dates and time set for meetings	1	3.20%
The use online tools instead of meetings	1	3.20%
The Library is losing its history by not recording events in a coherent and comprehensive way	1	3.20%
We are sometimes working in an unguided environment, with disconnected activities between teams	1	3.20%
Introduction of quarterly meetings with the Director	1	3.20%
There is also a heavy emphasis on success factors without looking at the value of learning from our failures	1	3.20%
Nobody pays attention to Unisa activities	1	3.20%
Read emails, answer telephone calls and attend meetings	1	3.20%
Regular feedback on the progress of the "Mvusaludzo project" to facilitate a smooth transition	1	3.20%
The Library should design a communication plan as part of strategic planning	1	3.20%



Comment	Frequency	% of cases
There are numerous web sites, standards, plans per academic libraries in the web that could be followed	1	3.20%
Best practice is available from ALA, ACRL as well as LIASA	1	3.20%
There is a lack of basic management principles	1	3.20%
Always take care of your colleagues	1	3.20%
Communicate problems and possible solutions, not problems only	1	3.20%
Staff must understand the importance of communicating work related matters	1	3.20%
Many sections in the Library work in silos, hence communication sometimes seem difficult	1	3.20%
Management should try to communicate with employees regularly about the conditions in the Library e.g. cleanliness and temperature	1	3.20%

**(Source: Author's fieldwork)**

Almost a quarter of the respondents did not have comments on how to improve the internal communication of the Library. While 12.90% would like top management to be considerate and listen to lower level staff members. About 9.70% indicated that management should be trained on how to listen to the concerns of staff members and an equal proportion also indicated that round table meetings should be held at directorate level in the Library.

The findings supported the information theory; particularly on issues of protocol and the hierarchical structure that limited the flow of information. Participants recommended the use of online channels such as the newsletter in sharing the available information with all members – especially those at lower levels – to limit gossip and rumours.

The demographic aspects of employees are important in a communication questionnaire as they provide information about the heterogeneous nature of

employees. In this study, the independent t-test and the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to determine the different responses or views yielded by respondents on the integrated internal communication of the Library, based on their demographic characteristics. Differences in responses or views of respondents were tested to bringing clarity and focus to the research problem.

### **7.5 Independent t-tests to determine differences in means across categories of demographic characteristics**

The independent t-test was used to determine whether the views of the Library employees, who participated in the study, differed by gender. The following composite constructs were used by averaging items in a construct: Information received (Q9); Information desired (Q10); Sources of information (Q11); Feedback on communication sent (Q12); Amount of information received through formal channels of communication (Q13); Amount of information received through informal channels of communication (Q14); Relational (Q15); Informational/relational (Q16); Organisational outcomes (Q17) and Organisational culture (Q18).

According to Keller (2018b), the assumptions of the independent t-test are that the observations should be independent. Data should come from a normally distributed population and that the variances are equal. In this study, independence was met, since the observations were randomly selected. Normality was achieved by applying the central limit theorem since the observations were more than 30.

The Levene's test of homogeneity of variances introduced by Levene (1960) was used to determine whether the variances were equal. If the variances were equal, then statistics under equal variances assumed were presented and, where the variances were not equal, statistics under equal variance not assumed were presented. The t-test was done at the 5% level of significance

and a p-value of less than .05. The test was highly significant if the p-value was less than .01. All the tests were two tailed. Two-tailed tests are conducted when the direction in terms of the relationship between constructs is not suggested (Field 2017; Afolabi, Mukhopadhyay & Nenty 2015). The t-tests are presented in the next sub-sections.

#### **7.5.1 *Independent t-test to determine the mean difference by gender***

An independent t-tests were used to determine whether males and females differed in their views towards the integrated internal communication of the Library.

The results of the Levene's test of homogeneity of variances showed that all constructs had p-values greater than .05 except "organisational outcomes" and, therefore, statistics under equal variances not assumed were discussed for organisational outcomes. For the other construct, statistics under equal variances assumed were discussed (Salkind 2010; Field 2017).

The assumption of equal variance was tested by using the Levene's test for equality of variance and all p-values were greater than .05, except the construct on *information received*, with a p-value of .005. In this case, statistics under equal variances not assumed were discussed for the construct.

The test on equality of means is shown in Table 7.15.

**Table 7.15: Independent t-test to determine the mean difference by gender**

Group Statistics					Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		T-test for Equality of Means		
Construct	Gender	N	Mean	Std deviation	F	Sig	Equal Variances	t-value	Sig (2 –tailed p-score)
Q9. Information received	Male	25	3.625	.912	8.383	.005	Assumed	2.217	.030
	Female	45	3.218	.619			Not	1.991	.054
Q10. Information desired	Male	26	4.386	.555	.651	.423	Assumed	.469	.640
	Female	46	4.314	.667			Not	.494	.623
Q11. Sources of information	Male	26	3.504	.6154	.115	.735	Assumed	1.527	.131
	Female	46	3.275	.608			Not	1.522	.134
Q12. Feedback on communication sent	Male	25	3.307	.722	.299	.586	Assumed	-.779	.438
	Female	45	3.439	.659			Not	-.759	.452
Q13. Amount of information received through formal channels of communication	Male	24	3.101	.911	1.200	.277	Assumed	.842	.403
	Female	46	2.938	.682			Not	.769	.447
Q14. Amount of information received through informal channels of	Male	24	2.700	1.203	.838	.363	Assumed	1.088	.281
	Female	46	2.396	1.055			Not	1.043	.303

Group Statistics					Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		T-test for Equality of Means		
Construct	Gender	N	Mean	Std deviation	F	Sig	Equal Variances	t-value	Sig (2 –tailed p-score)
communication									
Q15. Relational	Male	25	3.347	.726	.264	.609	Assumed	.936	.353
	Female	46	3.177	.731			Not	.938	.353
Q16. Informational/ relational	Male	25	3.642	.800	.550	.461	Assumed	1.900	.062
	Female	46	3.331	.570			Not	1.722	.093
Q17. Organisational outcomes	Male	25	3.337	.971	1.168	.284	Assumed	1.470	.146
	Female	46	3.022	.797			Not	1.387	.173
Q18. Organisational culture	Male	25	3.230	.667	.000	.991	Assumed	.804	.424
	Female	46	3.099	.648			Not	.797	.429

(Source: Author's fieldwork)

The independent t-tests indicated that there was no significant gender difference in mean scores on information received  $t(36.547) = 1.991, p = .054$ ; information desired  $t(70) = .469, p = .640$ ; sources of information  $t(70) = 1.527, p = .131$ ; feedback on communication sent  $t(68) = -.779, p = .438$ ; amount of information received through formal channels of communication  $t(68) = .842, p = .403$ ; amount of information received through informal channels of communication  $t(68) = 1.088, p = .281$ ; relational  $t(69) = .936, p = .353$ ; informational/relational  $t(69) = 1.900, p = .062$ ; organisational outcomes  $t(69) = 1.470, p = .146$ ; and organisational culture  $t(69) = .804, p = .424$ . It could be concluded that the views were interpreted in a similar way by both males and females and that gender was not a determinant factor in distinguishing the views on the integrated internal communication of the Library.

## **7.6 ANOVA tests to determine mean differences across categories of socio demographic characteristics**

The ANOVA was conducted to determine the impact of the following demographic characteristics on the integrated internal communication of the Library: educational qualification, current position, directorate and years of experience. The assumptions were tested as mentioned in the independent t-tests. In the case where the ANOVA tests of equality of means was significant (p-value less than .05), Tukey HSD (Honestly Significant Difference) *post hoc* tests were used to determine where the differences lie. They compare the means of the groups, using a strict criterion for significance (Salkind 2010). The ANOVA test results are presented in the next section.

### 7.6.1 ANOVA test to determine the mean difference by highest educational qualification

Highest educational qualification was divided into the following five groups: matric/grade 12 and below, certificate/diploma, bachelor's degree, honours degree and postgraduate degree.

The assumption of equality of variance was not violated across all educational levels, except on the construct on information desired, which had a p-value of .03. In this case the Welch robust tests of equality of variance were conducted and gave the same result as the ANOVA tests. Looking at Table 7.16, all p-values were greater than .05 indicating that the educational levels were homogeneous with regard to the ten constructs.

**Table 7.16: ANOVA test to determine the mean difference by educational qualification**

Construct		Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Q9. Information received	Between Groups	1.383	4	.346	.590	.671
	Within Groups	38.094	65	.586		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>39.478</b>	<b>69</b>			
Q10. Information desired	Between Groups	1.855	4	.464	1.199	.320
	Within Groups	25.924	67	.387		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>27.779</b>	<b>71</b>			
Q11. Sources of information	Between Groups	.329	4	.082	.207	.934
	Within Groups	26.630	67	.397		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>26.958</b>	<b>71</b>			

Construct		Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Q12. Feedback on communication sent	Between Groups	1.900	4	.475	1.029	.399
	Within Groups	30.007	65	.462		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>31.908</b>	<b>69</b>			
Q13. Amount of information received through formal channels of communication	Between Groups	1.780	4	.445	.748	.563
	Within Groups	38.685	65	.595		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>40.465</b>	<b>69</b>			
Q14. Amount of information received through informal channels of communication	Between Groups	4.708	4	1.177	.955	.438
	Within Groups	80.106	65	1.232		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>84.814</b>	<b>69</b>			
Q15. Relational	Between Groups	.537	4	.134	.242	.914
	Within Groups	36.644	66	.555		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>37.181</b>	<b>70</b>			
Q16. Informational/relational	Between Groups	2.671	4	.668	1.526	.205
	Within Groups	28.886	66	.438		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>31.558</b>	<b>70</b>			
Q17. Organisational outcomes	Between Groups	4.377	4	1.094	1.490	.215
	Within Groups	48.476	66	.734		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>52.853</b>	<b>70</b>			
Q18. Organisational	Between Groups	1.683	4	.421	.986	.421



Construct		Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
culture	Within Groups	28.163	66	.427		
	Total	29.847	70			

(Source: Author's fieldwork)

The mean scores between educational qualification levels were as follows: information received ( $F = .590, p = .671$ ); information desired ( $F = 1.199, p = .320$ ); sources of information ( $F = .207, p = .934$ ); feedback on communication sent ( $F = 1.029, p = .399$ ); amount of information received through formal channels of communication ( $F = .748, p = .563$ ); amount of information received through informal channels of communication ( $F = .955, p = .438$ ); relational ( $F = .242, p = .914$ ); informational/relational ( $F = 1.526, p = .205$ ); organisational outcomes ( $F = 1.490, p = .215$ ); and organisational culture ( $F = .986, p = .421$ ). Results indicated that there was no significant difference in mean scores between educational qualification levels of the respondents.

It could be concluded that the views of respondents were interpreted in a similar way across educational levels. The views of respondents towards the integrated internal communication of the Library were not dependent on educational levels on information received, information desired, sources of information, feedback on communication sent, amount of information received through formal channels of communication, amount of information received through informal channels of communication, relational, informational/ relational, organisational outcomes and organisational culture.

### **7.6.2 ANOVA test to determine the mean difference by current position**

Current position was categorised into three groups, which were middle management/supervisor, specialist and administrative staff.

The Levene's test of homogeneity of variances resulted in all constructs having p-values greater than .05. Therefore, the assumption of equality of variances was not violated across all groups of current position. The ANOVA results are tabulated in Table 7.17.

**Table 7.17: ANOVA test for mean difference by current position**

Construct		Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Q9. Information received	Between Groups	.426	2	.213	.360	.699
	Within Groups	37.936	64	.593		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>38.363</b>	<b>66</b>			
Q10. Information desired	Between Groups	.074	2	.037	.090	.914
	Within Groups	27.103	66	.411		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>27.177</b>	<b>68</b>			
Q11. Sources of information	Between Groups	.295	2	.148	.381	.685
	Within Groups	25.619	66	.388		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>25.915</b>	<b>68</b>			
Q12. Feedback on communication sent	Between Groups	1.795	2	.897	1.990	.145
	Within Groups	28.857	64	.451		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>30.651</b>	<b>66</b>			
Q13. Amount of information received through formal channels of communication	Between Groups	2.877	2	1.439	2.840	.066
	Within Groups	32.414	64	.506		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>35.292</b>	<b>66</b>			
Q14. Amount of	Between	6.324	2	3.162	2.844	.066

Construct		Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
information received through informal channels of communication	Groups					
	Within Groups	71.153	64	1.112		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>77.477</b>	<b>66</b>			
Q15. Relational	Between Groups	.445	2	.222	.411	.665
	Within Groups	35.185	65	.541		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>35.630</b>	<b>67</b>			
Q16. Informational/ relational	Between Groups	1.149	2	.575	1.244	.295
	Within Groups	30.031	65	.462		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>31.181</b>	<b>67</b>			
Q17. Organisational outcomes	Between Groups	.801	2	.401	.516	.599
	Within Groups	50.474	65	.777		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>51.275</b>	<b>67</b>			
Q18. Organisational culture	Between Groups	2.578	2	1.289	3.098	.052
	Within Groups	27.044	65	.416		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>29.622</b>	<b>67</b>			

(Source: Author's fieldwork)

The mean scores across current positions were as follows: information received ( $F = .360, p = .699$ ); information desired ( $F = .090, p = .914$ ); sources of information ( $F = .381, p = .685$ ); feedback on communication sent ( $F = 1.990, p = .145$ ); amount of information received through formal channels of communication ( $F = 2.840, p = .066$ ); amount of information received through informal channels of communication ( $F = 2.844, p = .066$ ); relational ( $F =$

.411,  $p = .665$ ); informational/relational ( $F = 1.244, p = .295$ ); organisational outcomes ( $F = .516, p = .599$ ); and organisational culture ( $F = 3.098, p = .052$ ). The current position of the respondent was not a determinant factor in distinguishing mean ratings on views of respondents on the integrated internal communication of the Library.

Therefore, the views of the respondents were not dependent on current position on information received, information desired, sources of information, feedback on communication sent, amount of information received through formal channels of communication, amount of information received through informal channels of communication, relational, informational/relational, organisational outcomes and organisational culture.

### **7.6.3 ANOVA test to determine the mean difference by directorate**

The following four directorates were identified in the Library: Information Resource Distribution, Information Resource Content Management, Library Corporate Services and Client Services.

The assumption of equality of variance was not violated for all of the constructs. Looking at Table 7.18, the means were not significantly different for all the constructs.

**Table 7.18: ANOVA test to determine the mean difference by directorate**

Construct		Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Q9. Information received	Between Groups	2.119	3	.706	1.253	.298
	Within Groups	36.078	64	.564		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>38.197</b>	<b>67</b>			
Q10. Information	Between	1.630	3	.543	1.636	.190

Construct		Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
desired	Groups					
	Within Groups	21.929	66	.332		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>23.559</b>	<b>69</b>			
Q11. Sources of information	Between Groups	.156	3	.052	.137	.937
	Within Groups	24.959	66	.378		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>25.115</b>	<b>69</b>			
Q12. Feedback on communication sent	Between Groups	1.162	3	.387	.843	.476
	Within Groups	29.414	64	.460		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>30.576</b>	<b>67</b>			
Q13. Amount of information received through formal channels of communication	Between Groups	2.200	3	.733	1.239	.303
	Within Groups	37.883	64	.592		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>40.083</b>	<b>67</b>			
Q14. Amount of information received through informal channels of communication	Between Groups	4.937	3	1.646	1.332	.272
	Within Groups	79.063	64	1.235		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>84.000</b>	<b>67</b>			
Q15. Relational	Between Groups	1.222	3	.407	.738	.533
	Within Groups	35.844	65	.551		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>37.065</b>	<b>68</b>			
Q16. Informational/	Between Groups	3.317	3	1.106	2.565	.062

Construct		Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
relational	Within Groups	28.019	65	.431		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>31.335</b>	<b>68</b>			
Q17. Organisational outcomes	Between Groups	2.742	3	.914	1.194	.319
	Within Groups	49.744	65	.765		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>52.486</b>	<b>68</b>			
Q18. Organisational culture	Between Groups	.493	3	.164	.365	.778
	Within Groups	29.284	65	.451		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>29.777</b>	<b>68</b>			

(Source: Author's fieldwork)

The mean scores across directorates were as follows: information received ( $F = 1.253, p = .298$ ); information desired ( $F = 1.636, p = .190$ ); sources of information ( $F = .137, p = .937$ ); feedback on communication sent ( $F = .843, p = .476$ ); amount of information received through formal channels of communication ( $F = 1.239, p = .303$ ); amount of information received through informal channels of communication ( $F = 1.332, p = .272$ ); relational ( $F = .738, p = .533$ ); informational/relational ( $F = 2.565, p = .062$ ); organisational outcomes ( $F = 1.194, p = .319$ ); and organisational culture ( $F = .365, p = .778$ ). Results indicated that there was no significant difference in mean scores across directorates.

Since there was homogeneity in mean ratings across directorates, it was possible to argue that the views of respondents were not dependent on the directorate for information received, information desired, sources of information, feedback on communication sent, amount of information received through formal channels of communication, amount of information received through

informal channels of communication, relational, informational/ relational, organisational outcomes and organisational culture.

#### **7.6.4 ANOVA test to determine the mean difference by years of experience**

The years of experience were classified into five categories, which were: less than a year; 1–2 years; 3–5 years; 6–10 years; and more than 10 years.

The Levene's test of equality of variances resulted in most constructs having p-values greater than .05, with the exception of the construct on organisational outcomes, which had a p-value of .002. It was highly significant and, in this case, the Welch Robust tests of equality of means were used and the results were the same as the ANOVA test (Salkind 2010). Table 7.19 presents the results of the ANOVA tests for equality of means.

**Table 7.19: ANOVA test for mean difference by years of experience**

<b>Construct</b>		<b>Sum of squares</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Mean square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Q9. Information received	Between Groups	.409	3	.136	.230	.875
	Within Groups	39.069	66	.592		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>39.478</b>	<b>69</b>			
Q10. Information desired	Between Groups	.519	3	.173	.432	.731
	Within Groups	27.260	68	.401		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>27.779</b>	<b>71</b>			
Q11. Sources of information	Between Groups	.634	3	.211	.546	.653
	Within Groups	26.324	68	.387		

Construct		Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
	<b>Total</b>	<b>26.958</b>	<b>71</b>			
Q12. Feedback on communication sent	Between Groups	1.014	3	.338	.722	.542
	Within Groups	30.894	66	.468		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>31.908</b>	<b>69</b>			
Q13. Amount of information received through formal channels of communication	Between Groups	1.593	3	.531	.902	.445
	Within Groups	38.872	66	.589		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>40.465</b>	<b>69</b>			
Q14. Amount of information received through informal channels of communication	Between Groups	1.564	3	.521	.413	.744
	Within Groups	83.249	66	1.261		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>84.814</b>	<b>69</b>			
Q15. Relational	Between Groups	.677	3	.226	.414	.743
	Within Groups	36.504	67	.545		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>37.181</b>	<b>70</b>			
Q16. Informational/relational	Between Groups	.543	3	.181	.391	.760
	Within Groups	31.014	67	.463		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>31.558</b>	<b>70</b>			
Q17. Organisational outcomes	Between Groups	.539	3	.180	.230	.875
	Within Groups	52.314	67	.781		



Construct		Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
	<b>Total</b>	<b>52.853</b>	<b>70</b>			
Q18. Organisational culture	Between Groups	.065	3	.022	.049	.985
	Within Groups	29.781	67	.444		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>29.847</b>	<b>70</b>			

(Source: Author's fieldwork)

The means across years of experience were the same for information received ( $F = .230, p = .875$ ); information desired ( $F = .432, p = .731$ ); sources of information ( $F = .546, p = .653$ ); feedback on communication sent ( $F = .722, p = .542$ ); amount of information received through formal channels of communication ( $F = .902, p = .445$ ); amount of information received through informal channels of communication ( $F = .413, p = .744$ ); relational ( $F = .414, p = .743$ ); informational/relational ( $F = .391, p = .760$ ); organisational outcomes ( $F = .230, p = .875$ ); and organisational culture ( $F = .049, p = .985$ ).

It could be concluded that the views were interpreted in a similar way, regardless of the years of experience. The views of respondents were not dependent on years of experience on information received, information desired, sources of information, feedback on communication sent, amount of information received through formal channels of communication, amount of information received through informal channels of communication, relational, informational/relational, organisational outcomes and organisational culture.

In summary: the socio-demographic characteristics were tested, making use of two types of tests: the independent t-test, which was used to determine whether the views of the respondents differ in terms of their gender, and the ANOVA test. These tests were conducted to determine the impact of the following socio-demographic characteristics on the integrated internal communication (IIC) of

the Library: educational qualifications, current position, directorate and years of experience.

The findings revealed that the views of respondents were not determined by gender, educational qualifications, current position, directorate and years of experience.

### **7.7 Degrees of relationships between the constructs**

The Pearson correlation analysis, which analyses the strength of the linear relationship between two normally distributed constructs, was used to determine the extent of the relationship between the composite constructs (Hauke & Tomasz 2011).

The guidelines proposed by Salkind (2018:373) were used in which the small letter “r” represents the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Salkind (2018:376) used the “eyeball method” to propose that an  $r = 0$  to  $.2$  was weak or no relationship;  $.2$  to  $.4$  weak relationship;  $.4$  to  $.6$  moderate relationship;  $.6$  to  $.8$  strong relationship; and  $.8$  to  $1.0$  very strong relationship. The correlations, which were done at the 5% level of significance, are presented in Table 7.20.

**Table 7.20: Pearson correlation coefficients of the constructs**

Construct	Mean	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Information received	3.36	-									
2. Information desired	4.34	.399**	–								
3.Sources of information	3.36	.620**	.284*	–							
4.Feedback on communication sent	3.39	.312**	.087	.584**	–						
5.Amount of information received through formal channels of communication	2.99	.339**	.216	.498**	.409**	–					
6.Amount of information received through informal channels of communication	2.50	.287*	.247*	.363**	.212	.630**	–				
7. Relational	3.24	.186	-.124	.270*	.080	.174	.234	–			
8.Informational/ relational	3.44	.333**	.080	.201	.026	.456**	.366**	.435**	–		
9.Organisational outcomes	3.13	.462**	.127	.433**	.201	.412**	.220	.401**	.567**	–	
10.Organisational culture	4.42	.262*	-.076	.260*	.193	.347**	.165	.596**	.554**	.667**	–
* $p < .05$ and ** $p < .01$											

(Source: Author's fieldwork)

The construct on information received had a statistically significant positive correlation with information desired ( $r = .399, p < .001$ ); source of information ( $r = .620, p < .001$ ); feedback on communication sent ( $r = .312, p < .001$ ); amount of information received through formal channels of communication ( $r = .339, p < .001$ ); amount of information received through informal channels of communication ( $r = .287, p < .05$ ); relational ( $r = .186, p < .05$ ); informational/relational ( $r = .333, p < .001$ ); organisational culture ( $r = .462, p < .001$ ); and organisational culture ( $r = .262, p < .05$ ). High levels of information desired are associated with the compatibility of the construct in measuring what it intends to measure – the integrated internal communication of the Library.

In this study, information desired had a weak statistical significant positive relationship with the factor on sources of information ( $r = .284, p < .05$ ) and the amount of information received through informal channels of communication ( $r = .247, p < .05$ ).

The composite construct on sources of information had a moderate statistical significant positive correlation with feedback on communication sent ( $r = .584, p < .001$ ); amount of information received through formal channels of communication ( $r = .498, p < .001$ ); and organisational outcomes ( $r = .433, p < .001$ ). Sources of information also had a statistically significant weak positive relationship with amount of information received through informal channels of communication ( $r = .363, p < .001$ ); relational ( $r = .270, p < .05$ ); and organisational culture ( $r = .260, p < .05$ ). Therefore, it could be argued that high levels in sources of information were associated with high levels in feedback on communication sent, amount of information received through formal channels of communication and organisational outcomes. Feedback on communication sent had a moderate statistical significant positive correlation, with the amount of information received through formal channels of communication ( $r = .409, p < .001$ ). This showed that high levels of feedback on communication sent was associated with high levels of amount of information received through formal channels of communication.

The amount of information received through formal channels of communication had a strong significant positive relationship with the amount of information received through informal channels of communication ( $r = .630, p < .001$ ); a moderate significant positive correlation with informational/relational ( $r = .456, p < .001$ ); organisational outcome ( $r = .412, p < .001$ ); and a statistically weak positive correlation with organisational culture ( $r = .347, p < .001$ ). High levels of the amount of information received through formal channels of communication were associated with high levels of amount of information received through informal channels of communication, informational/relational and organisational outcome.

The amount of information received through informal channels of communication had a weak significant positive relationship with informational/relational ( $r = .366, p < .001$ ).

Relational had a moderate statistically significant positive correlation with informational/relational ( $r = .435, p < .001$ ); organisational outcomes ( $r = .401, p < .001$ ); and organisational culture ( $r = .596, p < .001$ ). High levels of relational were associated with high levels of informational/relational, organisational outcomes and organisational culture.

The composite construct on informational/relational had a moderate statistically significant positive correlation with organisational outcomes ( $r = .567, p < .001$ ) and organisational culture ( $r = .554, p < .001$ ). High levels of informational/relational were associated with high levels of organisational outcomes and organisational culture.

There was a strong statistical significant positive correlation between organisational outcomes and organisational culture ( $r = .667, p < .001$ ). High levels of organisational outcomes were associated with high levels of organisational culture.

The foregoing correlation on the relationship between composite constructs are summarised in Table 7.21.

**Table 7.21: Summary of relationships between composite constructs**

Level of relationships	Correlation between composite constructs	
High levels of relationships	Construct 1	Construct 2
	Sources of information	Feedback
		Organisational outcomes
	Feedback	Formal channels
	Formal channels	Informal channels
		Informational/relational
		Organisational outcomes
	Relational	Informational/relational
		Organisational outcomes
		Organisational culture
	Informational/relational	Organisational outcomes
		Organisational culture
	Organisational outcomes	Organisational culture
Weak relationships	Construct 1	Construct 2
	Information desired	Sources of information
		Informal channels
	Informal channels	Informational/relational
	Sources of information	Informal channels
		Relational
		Organisational culture
	Formal channels	Organisational culture

(Source: Author's fieldwork)

## **7.8 Summary of the findings**

This chapter presented and discussed the results of the quantitative study. In terms of reliability, the findings revealed that the reliability of the measuring tool was excellent, with a Cronbach's alpha of .950.

The descriptive analysis of quantitative data was conducted on socio-demographic characteristics and the constructs that informed the survey questionnaire were analysed making use of the SPSS software package.

The independent t-test and ANOVA were used to determine the differences between socio-demographic characteristics and the Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to determine the degree of the relationships between the constructs or composite constructs.

The findings revealed that the IICA could evaluate communication in the Unisa Library. From the results, it was possible to propose that the communication needs of employees should include more, timeous, transparent and continuous communication; and that the preferred channels of communication include face-to-face meetings, info-web, written communication, lib-com and the newsletters. Employees also wanted to be engaged and they wanted their performance to be recognised.

The results further confirmed that the internal communication system of the Library recognised outstanding achievements by employees; and provided employees with regular updates on the Library achievements and of objectives. Employees usually received information from immediate supervisors, group meetings, minutes of meetings and their co-workers. Relationships were influenced by reporting lines/channels and employees trusted their co-workers for information on work related matters.

Furthermore, it became evident that supervisors alerted subordinates when they made mistakes and encouraged them to read the available information and to

participate in staff development programmes to enhance their skills. Subordinates received constructive feedback from immediate supervisors and colleagues on their performance. The recognised informal channel of communication was face-to-face conversations. The Library complied with employment equity by accommodating the communication needs of people with disabilities such as audio equipment.

The results revealed that employees recognised and complied with the Library values, as contained in the Library Service Charter. Some of the best practices identified in the Library included the customisation of information services and the sharing of tacit knowledge between retiring and young employees, which were identified as the latest developments in the field of organisational communication that contribute to the integrated internal communication constructs.

The Pearson correlation coefficients, which tests the relationship between constructs, revealed two categories of relationships between constructs: high levels of relationships and weak relationships.

The next chapter makes recommendations and proposals for further studies.



## **CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **8.1 Introduction**

The main aim of this study was to explore the concept of internal communication with the intention of developing an integrated internal communication measuring tool for the Unisa Library. The research problem evolved from the gaps in the literature and existing communication measurement instruments developed by researchers over time, which do not address the current communication challenges experienced by organisations.

In addressing the research problem, existing communication audit instruments – namely, the communication satisfaction questionnaire (CSQ), the International Communication Association (ICA) audit, complemented with the organisational culture survey (OCS) and the critical incident technique (CIT) – were adapted to develop an integrated internal communication audit (IICA) tool for the Library. The current trends and developments in the field of organisational communication were also considered to address the multicultural perspective of internal communication. The approach adopted in this study differs from the study conducted by Antonis (2005), which recommends the development of an instrument that can measure the actual levels of integration of communication to allow organisations to optimise operational and strategic objectives of the organisation.

The purpose of this study was to address the following research problem: to address the gaps in existing internal communication audit instruments. The research problem was addressed by firstly exploring the existing literature, followed by the exploratory sequential mixed method design in which qualitative interviews were conducted before conducting the quantitative survey.

This chapter provides the conclusion in terms of an overview of the study, limitations and strengths and recommendations for future studies. The chapter ends with concluding remarks on the study.

## **8.2 Overview of the study**

The overview of the study consists of the following: the background, summary of findings and conclusion on findings.

### **8.2.1 Background**

Chapter 1 provided the following central research question: *What is the most adequate tool for measuring integrated internal communication at the Unisa Library?* To answer the research question, Chapter 2 discussed the theoretical framework that informed this study. Chapter 3 explored the literature on existing perspectives on internal communication audits with the intention of identifying the most adequate tool for measuring integrated internal communication. Chapter 4 proposed the integrated internal communication audit (IICA) tool that addresses the integrated internal communication of the Library, while Chapter 5 provided the research methodology that was followed in this study. Qualitative interviews were conducted with 15 participants (members of management in the Library) to get their views and opinion that could be used to explore the internal communication of the Library.

Chapter 6 focused on the qualitative analysis of the results obtained from the data collected through interviews. The results were then used in the development of a measuring tool. Chapter 7 presented and discussed the results from the quantitative study, using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive analysis of quantitative data was conducted on socio-demographic characteristics of respondents and on the identified communication constructs. The results of this research were informed by the views of the respondents, as

presented in the survey questionnaire; hence the need to conduct the descriptive analysis on the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents.

The participants' views are important in the development of measuring instruments, as they vary. Two types of tests were conducted on the socio-demographic characteristics to test the homogeneity of employees: the independent t-test was used to determine whether the views of employees differed by gender and the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine whether the views of employees differed by educational qualifications, current position, directorate and years of experience.

This chapter presents the concluding remarks and the recommendations of this study.

### **8.2.2 *Summary of findings***

The main findings that answered the research problem as obtained through literature, qualitative and quantitative studies are outlined in the following sections.

#### **8.2.2.1 Lessons learned from the literature**

One of the objectives of this study was to conduct a theoretical exploration of internal communication and a theoretical review of internal communication.

Lessons learned from previous researchers indicated that most studies make use of the CSQ and the ICA instruments, complemented by the CIT. The lack of recognition of the multicultural perspective in the auditing of communication of organisations was pointed out by researchers as a gap in the existing internal communication audit instruments.

This study further reviewed the existing literature by complementing the communication audit instruments with the OCS, resulting in the development of the IICA tool that was adapted from the constructs of the four instruments: the

ICA, the CSQ, the OCS and the CIT. The IICA was tested in the Unisa Library and the identified constructs successfully measured the integrated internal communication of the Library.

#### **8.2.2.2 Results of the qualitative study**

This study also aimed at exploring the communication needs of employees and the latest developments in the field of organisational communication. The interviews conducted with 15 members of management explored the communication needs of employees. The results of the interviews contributed to the refinement of the IICA tool for the Library.

Results indicated that there was no instrument for measuring internal communication in the Unisa Library, although the Library was in the process of acquiring a research tool called LibQUAL. Participants indicated that an instrument was needed to provide guidance to the communication system and for the achievement of the following communication objectives identified for the Library: to assess tacit knowledge and information sharing; measure the success of communication with subordinates; serve as a means of checking and testing, if the existing communication is desired; provide guidance on how to communicate, the issues to communicate, the preferred media and the desired changes in the communication of the Library; and that the evaluation results can be used to improve the communication system of the Library and enhance service delivery.

In the qualitative research, management indicated that most of their communication with subordinates took the form of face-to-face conversations, emails and the social media such as WhatsApp and SMS. The most preferred communication channels identified by the participants were the email, and face-to-face conversations and written communication.

In terms of the latest developments in the field of organisational communication, the concept of transformation was identified as important in the Unisa Library and the Library Transformation Charter was singled out as a roadmap in the implementation process. The concept was not considered a construct in this study, but treated as a process of change.

The following sub-constructs that contributed to the organisational culture construct of the IICA tool were adopted in this study: transformation or change; changes in government action/legislation; customised services; employment equity; diversity of employees; information communication technology (ICT), which mediates the flow of information; and customised services was adopted as a sub-construct in this study and a best practice in the Library.

Compliance with the Library values was reported to be at an acceptable level and the Library Service Charter was recognised by employees as an important document. Diversity was adopted as part of Employment Equity (EE), as the Library employees differed in terms of race, age, marital status, ethnicity, gender and colour.

The concept of BEE was not considered as a construct in this study, in that it was identified as an intervention aimed at the achievement of economic equality. The results indicated that the Library employees could not telecommute or work from home because of the nature of their work, which demands their presence in the Library. Therefore, the concept was deemed irrelevant in this study.

The identified areas of improvement in the internal communication of the Library included: clear channels of communication; improved communication between managers and employees at lower levels; knowledge sharing and the management of tacit knowledge; the recognition of the social media for internal communication; and regular communication through the newsletters.

The findings of the qualitative study assisted in the identification of the communication needs of employees and the identification of the latest developments in the field of organisational communication, which contributed to the IICA tool, to answer the research question in this study.

#### **8.2.2.3 Results of the quantitative study**

The results of the quantitative study addressed the reliability of the IICA tool, the socio-demographic characteristics and the communication audit constructs.

The internal consistency of the IICA tool was measured by using the Cronbach alpha and the tool proved to be reliable with a Cronbach alpha of .950.

In terms of the socio-demographic characteristics, the independent t-test and the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to determine whether the views of respondents differed in terms of their socio-demographics. Results indicated that the views of respondents were not influenced by their gender, educational qualifications, current position, directorate and years of experience. The IICA tool was consistent in measuring the views of people from different demographic backgrounds.

The following results on the analysis of the IICA tool were obtained:

The results of the *informational construct* showed that participants often received information on personnel news; and that they desired or wanted to receive information on the requirements of their jobs, personnel news and government action/legislation. The participants often received information from their immediate supervisors, group meetings with their teams, minutes of meetings and co-workers in their unit. They received feedback on the communication that they had sent to their immediate supervisors and work colleagues. Their subordinates did not provide them with feedback. Participants obtained more information from the following formal channels: email, info-web

and face-to-face conversations. However, little information is obtained from the Skype, G-Drive and bulletin boards.

The main informal channel that provided participants with the most information was face-to-face conversations. Very little information was obtained from the following informal channels: Myspace, Instant messenger and Instagram. The results of the informational construct were in line with the information theory and media richness theories, which promote the flow of rich media for the achievement of organisational goals.

The results were also in line with the excellence theory, which promotes feedback in facilitating the two-way symmetrical flow of information. The results confirmed the importance of feedback from supervisors, which was in line with the findings of previous researchers, who indicated that feedback from supervisor results in the satisfaction of employees.

The results of the *relational construct* indicated that relationships in the Library were influenced by clear reporting lines/channels; the use of horizontal communication to interact with co-workers, trusting co-workers and encouraging subordinates to read the available information to enhance their skills. This is in line with the excellence theory that promotes relationships occurring in organisations.

In terms of the *informational/relational construct* that focused on the information versus relationships with supervisors, respondents agreed that their supervisors alerted them when they made mistakes; their supervisors listened to them; they trusted their supervisors; they received constructive feedback from their supervisors on their performance appraisal; and that the Library encouraged employee development through talent management programmes. In summary, the results confirmed that supervisors supported their subordinates and built long lasting relationships with them, as promoted by the excellence theory.

The *communication channels construct* focused on the formal and informal communication channels. Results revealed that respondents received most information from the following formal channels: email, info-web, Lib-com, face-to-face conversations, written communication and newsletters. In terms of informal communication, respondents received most information from face-to-face conversations. Grapevine was identified as a barrier to communication, as it has the potential to harm the satisfaction of employees.

The results of the *organisational outcomes construct* indicated that respondents received recognition for outstanding achievements; were informed of their progress in the Library at this point in time; and that they got regular updates on the Library's achievement of objectives. The results showed that the Library maintained a healthy communication atmosphere with the internal clients, which built a sense of belonging and loyalty to the organisation.

The *organisational culture construct* revealed that the Library promoted the involvement of employees in the activities of the organisation and that the Library took good care of employees and their needs. Respondents indicated that they participated in regular employee meetings; they had a say in decisions affecting their work; the Library values as contained in the Service Charter were clearly communicated to them; the Library accommodated the communication needs of people with disabilities, such as audio equipments; they made sure that information services were customised to the specific needs of an individual client and that the people they worked with functioned as a team. The results were in line with the excellence theory that recognises issues of organisational structure, culture, systems of internal communication, gender, diversity power and activism.

The *communication experiences construct* focused on the communication experiences of respondents. Results revealed that, regardless of the positive communication experiences encountered in the Library, negative communication experiences encountered with top management, co-workers and



immediate supervisors ranged from poor, minimal to lack of communication. There was also a lack of feedback and transparency in minutes of meetings and the achievement of goals and objectives of the Library. It could be deduced that the communication experiences of respondents were valuable to this study, in that the communication weaknesses experienced in the Library were identified.

*Comments on how to improve the internal communication of the Library* revealed that top management must communicate with employees at lower levels to eliminate rumours. They should be considerate and listen to lower level employees and that management should be trained on how to listen to the concerns of employees. Roundtable meetings should be held at directorate level in the Library.

In terms of the relationships between the constructs, results of the correlation coefficient analysis revealed two types of relationships between the constructs: high levels of relationships and weak levels of relationships.

#### **8.2.2.4 A reflection on research sub-problems**

In addition to the above results, the identified constructs addressed the following sub-questions of the research:

***RQ1: What methods for measuring integrated internal communication exist in the literature?***

Literature indicates that data collection methods or techniques consist of survey questionnaires, interviews, network analysis and the critical incident technique (CIT) (Zwijze-Koning & De Jong 2007).

Chapter 5 identified the qualitative interviews and the quantitative survey questionnaire. The data collection design was informed by the research methodology, which employed the exploratory sequential mixed method design. The qualitative interviews explored the communication system of the Library

and the quantitative survey method followed the descriptive approach to evaluate the communication system of the Library, making use of the IICA tool.

***RQ2: What constructs contribute to the measurement of integrated internal communication based on existing perspectives?***

The IICA tool consisted of the following constructs: informational, relational, informational/relational, communication channels, organisational outcomes, organisational culture and the communication experiences. The reliability of the identified constructs proved to be excellent, with Cronbach alpha of .950.

***RQ3: What communication systems are employees exposed to in the organisation?***

The literature indicates that communication systems include communication processes that are used in the organisation to facilitate the flow of information. The communication processes consisted of formal and informal communication channels to which employees were exposed. Employees used the existing channels to facilitate the directional flow of communication that took the form of upwards, downwards and horizontal direction. The literature indicates that the communication system of the organisation should provide a feedback loop and be symmetrical according to the excellence theory.

The literature further indicates that communication audits address communication problems that affected the communication system of an organisation. The communication experiences of respondents revealed poor and lack of communication and the lack of transparency of minutes of meetings as some of the problems experienced in the communication system of the Library.

The results of the quantitative study indicated that respondents preferred communication systems that provided them with more, timeous, transparent and continuous communication. The preferred channels of communication included

face-to-face meetings, info-web, written communication, lib-com and the newsletters. Employees also wanted to be engaged and they want their performance to be recognised.

The quantitative results further indicated that the internal communication system of the Library provided employees with regular updates on the Library achievements of objectives. Employees usually received information from immediate supervisors, group meetings, minutes of meetings and their co-workers. Relationships were influenced by reporting lines/channels and employees trusted their co-workers for information on work related matters.

Supervisors alerted subordinates when they made mistakes and encouraged them to read the available information and participate in staff development programmes to enhance their skills. Subordinates were also given constructive feedback on their performance. Feedback on communication sent was received from immediate supervisors and colleagues.

***RQ4: What are the emerging trends/latest developments in the field of organisational communication that should be added to the new measuring tool?***

The qualitative interviews were conducted in this study to explore the communication system of the Library. Some of the latest developments included the best practices identified during interaction with members of management in the Library, such as the customisation of information services and the sharing of tacit knowledge between young and retiring employees. During interviews, one of the participants indicated that the LibQUAL+ survey tool was being purchased. The survey tool was implemented in August 2018 and identified as the best practice, because it gives users a chance to engage with the Library in addressing their information needs to ensure improvement in the provision of information services.

Variables such as transformation, Ubuntu, employment equity and the Library values were also adopted in this study as part of the organisational culture construct. From the foregoing discussion, it could be concluded that the organisational culture construct correlates very well with the communication constructs. The CIT assisted the study by revealing the issues that were not addressed by the questionnaire.

***RQ5: What does empirical research/existing literature provide in terms of the measurement of integrated internal communication?***

Literature provided this study with background information on existing communication audit instruments, whereas empirical research revealed that organisational communication had changed from a uni-dimensional to a multi-dimensional construct. A single measuring instrument is unlikely to provide a valid, reliable and trustworthy evaluation. A multimethod approach should be adopted, considering the nature of what is under investigation. The communication audit instruments must be refined and complemented with other instruments, preferably qualitative (audit) instruments, such as the CIT, focus groups, or in-depth interviews to meet the ever-changing organisational needs and address the changing cultural, political, technological environments.

This study adopted the recommendations of empirical research and qualitative interviews were conducted, exploring the multicultural, political and technological environments, in addition to communication related questions.

Previous studies indicated that researchers recognise, apply, adapt and complement the Downs-Hazen CSQ with other instruments, such as the International Communication Audit (ICA) survey, the critical incident technique (CIT) and the organisational culture survey (OCS). Existing literature further reminds researchers that the ICA survey can be used in conjunction with other methods, but warns that the replacement of the Likert-type scale makes it difficult to compare data from the new and the old audits.

Barker and Angelopulo (2006) state that there is no single ready-made evaluation instrument for measuring integration as yet; hence the need to integrate the existing measurement instruments to ensure the assessment of communication in an integrated manner.

As a result, the identified communication audit instruments (CSQ & ICA) were complemented with the organisational culture survey and the critical incident technique and adapted for the purpose of this study to develop and test an IICA tool.

This study was mainly informed by the excellence theory, complemented with the information and the media richness theories, in identifying the constructs that best inform the IICA tool.

### **8.2.3 Conclusion on findings**

The foregoing results on socio-demographic characteristics and the IICA constructs confirm the viability of the measuring tool. The views of participants were not influenced by their socio-demographic characteristics.

The *informational construct* successfully measured the information received, information desired, information received from sources, feedback of information sent and the amount of information received through both the formal and informal channels. Respondents agreed that the flow of information in the Library was two-way symmetrical and facilitated the achievement of the objectives of the organisation. Some of the communication needs of employees identified by respondents included: information on personnel news, the requirements of their jobs and information on government action/legislation.

Results on the *relational construct* indicated healthy trust relationships prevailing between employees in the Library. Relationships were influenced by

clear reporting lines; the flow of horizontal communication between co-workers; and the existing communication channels.

The *informational/relational construct* results revealed that supervisors provided subordinates with the necessary information and support and that built long-lasting relationships between them.

The *communication channels construct* identified the email, info-web and Lib-com as the most preferred channels of communication, while face-to-face communication was identified as the most active channel for communication between supervisors and subordinates.

The results of the *organisational outcomes construct* revealed that employees were treated as important stakeholders in the Library, which created a sense of belonging. Participants acknowledged that they did get recognition for outstanding achievements and that they were regularly updated on the achievements of the Library.

The *organisational culture construct* measured the perception of respondents about the Library and results indicated that participants viewed the Library as an organisation that took care of them and their needs by communicating the Library values; involving them in decisions affecting their work; promoting their participation in activities; promoting diversity by accommodating the communication needs of people with disabilities; promoting the customisation of services; and creating a healthy working environment that make them to work as a team.

The *communication experiences construct* revealed that communication in the Library was positive. However, the communication experiences raised by respondents were negative, identifying among others, the lack of feedback and poor communication on the activities and goals of the Library. This did not discredit the IICA tool, but served as an indication that the tool could also

identify the communication weaknesses in the communication system of an organisation.

The Library should recognise the following best practices that were identified in this study: customisation of information services; the sharing of knowledge between young and retiring employees; the introduction of the PressReader, which is the world's most comprehensive and trusted digital news; and the LibQUAL+ survey tool; which can assist the Library to determine the needs of clients – in particular the communication needs of internal clients as applied in this study.

### **8.3 Strengths and limitations**

The identified strengths and limitations are outlined in the following sections.

#### **8.3.1 Strengths**

Limited studies integrate the OCS with the communication audit instruments in the development of measuring instruments to audit the internal communication of an organisation. This study proved that constructs of the OCS and the CIT integrate well with the communication audit constructs, as confirmed by the Cronbach's alpha results conducted on the IICA tool.

The sequential mixed method design was valuable in this study, because most of the views raised by participants in the qualitative interviews were confirmed by the quantitative study. Participants were consistent in their views on both the interviews and the survey.

The findings of this study offered researchers the basis for testing the IICA tool in other organisations.

### **8.3.2 Limitations**

The sample size was small and the employees on fixed term contracts were reluctant to participate in the study, which affected the response rate. A limited number of responses were received, and, therefore, the results could not be generalised. The fact that the instrument was tested in one organisation further serves as a limitation in the size of the population.

The response rate was further affected by the issue of timing, because the questionnaire was distributed towards the festive season period, when most of the employees were looking forward to their holiday or had left for their holidays. On making a follow-up in January 2018, employees were overloaded and were not willing to engage in surveys and, therefore, few responses were received during the follow-up.

The use of the online survey during the pretest did not yield positive response and this resulted in the change in data collection strategy, from an online survey to a pen and paper based survey.

## **8.4 Recommendations for future studies**

Based on the results presented in Chapter 7, it can be deduced that the adapted IICA tool is a reliable measure of the integrated internal communication of an organisation. However, this is the first initial measurement instrument that was tested at one institution; considered the South African multicultural perspective; and integrated the OCS with the communication audit instruments, recognising, among others, the organisational values, employment equity legislation, and the variables of customised service, diversity and Ubuntu.

It is recommended that the study be duplicated in other institutions and organisations to validate the results and to explore the impact of telecommuting on integrated internal communication further. The qualitative study results



indicated that the concept was not feasible to the majority of the directorates in The Library, due to the nature of the services rendered. The measuring tool can be used as a benchmark for further studies. It can be refined; particularly where a low correlation was evident in the results.

## **8.5 Concluding remarks**

The research results answered the research question by recommending the IICA tool as the most appropriate instrument for measuring integrated internal communication in the Library, with a Cronbach's alpha of .950, which is excellent. The results further showed that the OCS and the CIT can complement the CSQ and the ICA audit in evaluating internal communication in an integrated manner. The development of the IICA tool, which can be used to audit internal communication in organisations, addressed the research problem.

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## **ADDENDUM A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

**Interview No:**

A MEASURING TOOL FOR INTEGRATED INTERNAL COMMUNICATION: A CASE STUDY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA LIBRARY

Place of interview:

Date of interview:

Dear Library Employee

The purpose of this research is to obtain information from the library employees for the completion of my Master's Degree in Communication Science. Approval to conduct the research at the Unisa Library was granted by the Unisa Research Permission Sub-committee (RPSC).

Information obtained through this interview will be used to develop a measurement tool for conducting a communication audit or assessing the communication system of the Library to establish the communication weaknesses and strength, which will assist the Library management in improving the Library communication practices.

A communication audit is usually conducted when organisations experience changes imposed by internal and external factors and trends such as transformation, diversity, employment equity and the changes in cultural, political and technological environments. The challenge experienced in conducting communication audits in most organisations is the adequacy of measuring instruments, as the existing instruments are outdated and do not address current trends. An internal communication audit tool that addresses the communication system of the Unisa Library will be developed, based on the results of this research.

This interview focuses on obtaining your insight into and knowledge of the internal communication system of the Library to enhance the online survey questionnaire, which will be completed by all employees in the Library.



As a member of management, you are eligible to participate in the interview process. Recording devices are recommended for this research and your permission is requested for the use of those devices. It is hoped that the findings of this interview will yield valuable information that will enhance the development of the measurement tool.

The confidentiality of the information that you provide as part of this interview process, both the recordings and written notes, is guaranteed. Your name will not be disclosed and your responses will remain anonymous.

You have the right to withdraw from this interview process at any time.

## **Interview Questions**

### **Availability of an internal communication audit instrument** (*Exploring methods of measuring organisational communication*)

1. Do you measure your communication in the Library?
  - 1.1 If so, which method do you use?
  - 1.2 If not, what are the reasons for not measuring your communication?

### **Communication audit constructs** (*Identification of constructs that contribute to the measurement of communication*)

2. What factors or constructs do you think contributes to the measurements of the communication that takes place in your organisation?

### **Communication systems that are used to communicate with employees** (*Exploring communication systems*)

3. What communication channels are used in the Library?
4. Which communication channels do you prefer?
5. How would you describe your communication with your subordinates?
6. Does your work require interaction with members of other units within the Library?
  - 6.1 If so, what communication channels do you use?

## **Exploring latest developments or emerging trends in the field of organisational communication**

### *Transformation*

- 7. What is your understanding of the concept of transformation?
  - 7.1 In your opinion, is the Library experiencing transformation?
  - 7.2 If so, what are the experiences?

### *Employment Equity:*

- 8. What is your understanding of Employment Equity?
  - 8.1 In your opinion, is there an employment equity plan for the Library?
  - 8.2 If so, what does the plan address?
  - 8.3 If not, do you know the reasons for the absence of the plan?

### *Black Economic Empowerment*

- 9. What is your understanding of black economic empowerment?
  - 9.1 Does that Library recognise the Black Economic Empowerment legislation?
  - 9.2 If yes, what initiatives have the Library introduced?
  - 9.3 If not, what are the reasons for the lack of the recognition of the national legislation on black economic empowerment?

### *Changes in information technology/ technological developments*

- 10. Does the Library use information technology systems?
  - 10.1 If so, what information technology systems do you have access to?
  - 10.2 Which of the information technology systems are the most effective?
  - 10.3 What changes in information technology systems have the library introduced in the past year, if any?
  - 10.4 If not, what do you think is the cause of the absence of information technology in the Library?

### *Changes in government action*

- 11. Are you aware of any changes in government action affecting the Library?
  - 11.1 If so, what are the changes?

11.2 In what way do the changes contribute to the internal communication system of the Library?

### *Customised services*

12. Have you ever dealt with customised services (services directed at the needs of an individual client) in the Library?

12.1 If so, what was the nature of the request?

12.2 How did you respond to such a request:

12.3 How do you think customised services affect the communication of the Library?

13. Telecommuting

13.1 What is your understanding of telecommuniting?

13.2 Does the Library practice telecommuting?

13.3 If so, what impact does the practice have on the communication of the Library?

## **The multicultural perspective**

### *Values of the Library*

14. Do you know if the Library has set values?

14.1 If so, what are the values?

14.2 How do you think the Library values contribute to the internal communication system of the Library?

### *Different cultures of individual employees*

15. Are there any differences in the cultures of individual employees in the Library?

15.1 If so, what are the differences?

15.2 In your opinion, do you think cultural differences influence the communication system of the Library?

15.3 If not, is there a shared culture for the Library employees?

16. Diversity of employees

16.1 Do you think the Library employees are diverse?

16.2 If so, in what way are the Library employees diverse?

*Ethical conduct and morals*

17. How can you describe the conduct of employees in their communication with other employees in the Library?

17.1 Do you think employees influence the internal communication system of the Library, if so how?

**General question**

18. If given a chance to improve the internal communication system of the Library, what changes do you think you can propose?

Thank you for your participation.

## **ADDENDUM B: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

### **A MEASURING TOOL FOR INTEGRATED INTERNAL COMMUNICATION: A CASE STUDY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA LIBRARY**

#### **INFORMED CONSENT**

Dear Librarian

Thank you for participating in this study.

My name is Awelani Reineth Mandiwana, a Master's student at Unisa: Department of Communication Science and my supervisor is Professor R Barker. Through this survey, I would like to get your perception regarding the communication that takes place in your work environment.

#### **Procedure**

You will be asked to answer a number of questions/statements. Please answer them as honestly as possible. There are no right or wrong answers. Try not to spend too much time thinking about each question/statement, your first response is the best. The completion of this survey should take 20-30 minutes of your time.

#### **Voluntary participation and confidentiality**

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Your answers to all questions/statements will remain completely confidential and the anonymity of your responses is guaranteed.

#### **Benefits**

Your answers will help to improve the communication system of your organisation.

#### **Risks**

There are no risks involved in participating in this study.

If you would like to take part in this survey, please consent by completing the questions by putting a cross or an X on the most appropriate response.

## SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHICS

In the following range of questions, please choose the appropriate answer.

### Q1. What is your gender?

Male	1	
Female	2	

### Q2. What is your race?

Black	1	
White	2	
Coloured	3	
Indian	4	
Asian	5	
Other(please specify)	6	

### Q3. What is your age?

Below 30 years	1	
30–39 years	2	
40–49 years	3	
50–59 years	4	
60 years and above	5	

### Q4. What is your highest educational qualification?

Matric/Grade 12 and below	1	
Certificate	2	
Diploma	3	
Bachelor's degree	4	
Honours degree	5	
Master's degree	6	
Doctorate degree	7	
Other (please specify)	8	

**Q5. Which of the following best describes your current position?**

Senior Management	1	
Middle Management	2	
Supervisor	3	
Specialist	4	
Administrative staff	5	
Other (please specify)	6	

**Q6. Which of the following best describes your Directorate?**

Executive Management	1	
Information Resource Distribution	2	
Information Resource Content Management	3	
Library Corporate Services	4	
Client Services	5	
Other (please specify)	6	

**Q7. For how long have you been working in your current position?**

Less than a year	1	
1–2 years	2	
3–5 years	3	
6–10 years	4	
More than 10 years	5	

**Q8. What is your employment status?**

Permanent	1	
Temporary/Contract	2	
Other (please specify)	3	

## SECTION B: COMMUNICATION CONSTRUCTS

### **Section B1: Informational**

The purpose of the following statements/questions is to establish the communication that takes place in your work environment.

**Q9. Which information do you currently receive? (Information that you receive more often in your work environment)**

Information received	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
a) Requirements of my job	1	2	3	4	5
b) The Library policies	1	2	3	4	5
c) Employee benefits	1	2	3	4	5
d) Government action/legislation affecting the Library	1	2	3	4	5
e) Changes taking place in the Library	1	2	3	4	5
f) The Library performance	1	2	3	4	5
g) Personnel news (e.g. new appointments, changes in remuneration packages)	1	2	3	4	5

**Q10. Which information do you think is important for you to receive? (Information that you need/desire more often for optimal performance)**

Information desired	Unimportant	Of little importance	Moderately important	Important	Very Important
a) Requirements of my job	1	2	3	4	5
b) The Library policies	1	2	3	4	5
c) Employee benefits	1	2	3	4	5
d) Government affairs/legislation affecting the Library	1	2	3	4	5
e) Changes taking place in the Library	1	2	3	4	5
f) The Library performance	1	2	3	4	5
g) Personnel news (e.g. new appointments,	1	2	3	4	5



changes in remuneration packages)					
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**Q11. To what extent do you currently receive information from the following sources?**

Sources of information	Not to any extent at all	To a little extent	To some extent	To a large extent	To a very large extent
a) Senior management	1	2	3	4	5
b) My immediate supervisor	1	2	3	4	5
c) Individuals in other units	1	2	3	4	5
d) Co-workers in my unit	1	2	3	4	5
e) Group meetings with my team	1	2	3	4	5
f) Minutes of meetings	1	2	3	4	5
g) The grapevine	1	2	3	4	5
h) My subordinates	1	2	3	4	5
i) The social media (e.g. Whatsapp, SMS or Facebook)	1	2	3	4	5

**Q12. From the following sources, who took most action/provide feedback on the communication that you have sent?**

Feedback on information sent	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
a) Senior management	1	2	3	4	5
b) Middle management	1	2	3	4	5
c) My immediate supervisor	1	2	3	4	5
d) My immediate work colleagues	1	2	3	4	5
e) Other units within the Library	1	2	3	4	5
f) My subordinates	1	2	3	4	5

**Q13. How would you rate the amount of information that you usually receive through the following formal channels of communication, as identified/ prescribed by the Library?**

Amount of information received through formal channels	Very little information	Some information	Great information	Very great information	I do not have access to this channel
a) Formal face-to-face conversations (e.g. meetings, briefing sessions, workshops)	1	2	3	4	5
b) Witten communication (letters, memos, reports, minutes of meetings, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
c) Telephone	1	2	3	4	5
d) Email	1	2	3	4	5
e) Info-web	1	2	3	4	5
f) Newsletter	1	2	3	4	5
g) Lib-com	1	2	3	4	5
h) Skype	1	2	3	4	5
i) Central Information repository (G-Drive)	1	2	3	4	5
j) Bulletin boards	1	2	3	4	5

**Q14. How would you rate the amount of information that you usually receive through the following informal channels of communication? (Channels that are not identified/prescribed by the Library, but are readily available for communication purposes).**

Amount of information received through informal channels	Very little information	Some information	Great information	Very great information	I do not have access to this channel
a) Informal face-to-face conversations	1	2	3	4	5
b) Twitter	1	2	3	4	5
c) WhatsApp	1	2	3	4	5
d) SMS	1	2	3	4	5
e) Facebook	1	2	3	4	5
f) MySpace	1	2	3	4	5
g) Instant messenger	1	2	3	4	5
h) Grapevine	1	2	3	4	5
i) Instagram	1	2	3	4	5

## **Section B2: Relational**

**Q15. Indicate your level of agreement on the following relational issues/relationships that takes place in your work environment**

<b>Relational issues/relationships in the Library</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
a) Reporting lines/channels are clear	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
b) My subordinates are responsive to downward directive communication	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
c) My subordinates feel responsible for initiating accurate upward communication.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
d) My subordinates are receptive to discussions.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
e) I encourage my subordinates to read the available information to enhance their skills.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
f) Information received through grapevine is accurate.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
g) I use horizontal communication to facilitate requests for information from my co-workers.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
h) I trust my co-workers.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

### Section B3: Informational/relational

**Q16. Indicate your level of agreement on the following issues on relational information**

Information/relational issues	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a) My supervisor listens to me.	1	2	3	4	5
b) My supervisor alerts me when I make mistakes.	1	2	3	4	5
c) I trust my supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5
d) I receive constructive feedback from my supervisor on my performance appraisal.	1	2	3	4	5
e) The Library encourages continuous staff development through talent management programmes.	1	2	3	4	5
f) The Library's communication makes me to identify with the institution.	1	2	3	4	5
g) Regular communication from management creates an atmosphere of trust in the Library.	1	2	3	4	5
h) The attitudes toward communication at the Library is basically healthy.	1	2	3	4	5
i) Communication practices are flexible to suit organisational emergencies.	1	2	3	4	5

## Section B4: Organisational outcomes

**Q17. Indicate your level of agreement on the following issues on organisational outcomes.**

<b>Organisational outcomes</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
a) I get recognition for outstanding achievements.	1	2	3	4	5
b) I get regular updates on the Library's achievement of objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
c) I am given an opportunity to "make a difference" – contribute to the overall success of the Library.	1	2	3	4	5
d) I am informed of my progress in the Library up to this point in time.	1	2	3	4	5
e) I am informed of my chances for "getting ahead" or promotion in the Library.	1	2	3	4	5
f) I am informed of the Library's overall communicative efforts.	1	2	3	4	5
g) I get regular updates on the Library's overall quality of service.	1	2	3	4	5

## SECTION C: ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

**Q18. In the following range of statements, choose the response that best describes how you feel.**

Organisational culture	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a) The Library values as contained in the Service Charter were clearly communicated to me.	1	2	3	4	5
b) People in the Library promote Ubuntu by respecting each other's culture.	1	2	3	4	5
c) People I work with are honest with each other.	1	2	3	4	5
d) I feel that Library management cares about its staff (they seek to develop employee's full potential and act as good mentors).	1	2	3	4	5
e) The Library values the ideas of employees at lower level.	1	2	3	4	5
f) I participate in staff meetings that are held on a regular basis.	1	2	3	4	5
g) I have a say in decisions that affect my work.	1	2	3	4	5
h) The Library frequently tries new innovative ideas to improve the communication system.	1	2	3	4	5
i) When changes are made in the Library, the reasons why are made clear.	1	2	3	4	5
j) I receive information on government legislation that affects the Library.	1	2	3	4	5
k) In the Library, adaptive ways are created to meet the changing needs of government.	1	2	3	4	5
l) I make sure that information services are	1	2	3	4	5

<b>Organisational culture</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
customised to the specific needs of an individual client.					
m) The Library informs employees about employment equity initiatives on a regular basis.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
n) The Library accommodates the communication needs of people with disabilities such as audio equipment.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
o) The Library staff complement is representative of the Library demographic population.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
p) The Library management profile is representative of the Library demographic population.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
q) The Library communication system recognises the diversity of employees.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
r) The Library treats people in a consistent manner regardless of their cultural differences.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
s) People I work with function as a team.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

**Q19. Do you comply with the Library values?**

Compliance with the values is not important to me	1	
I do not comply with the values at all	2	
I comply with the values to some extent	3	
I comply with the values very well	4	
I try to live the values daily	5	

## SECTION D: COMMUNICATION EXPERIENCE

As you have been recording your responses to the items in this survey, the questions may have brought to mind a recent work-related experience of yours in which communication was particularly effective or ineffective. Please respond to the questions below and give us a clear summary of that experience.

### Q20. To whom does this experience primarily relate?

Subordinate	1	
Co-worker	2	
Immediate Supervisor	3	
Middle Management	4	
Top Management	5	

### Q21. What is the level of effectiveness of the quality of communication in the Library from your own experience?

Very ineffective	1	
Ineffective	2	
Neither effective nor ineffective	3	
Effective	4	
Very effective	5	

### Q22. Describe any positive and negative internal communication experiences that you have encountered in the Library.

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**Q23. Do you have any comments on how to improve the internal communication of the Library?**

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Thank you very much. Your participation in this survey is highly appreciated.

**ADDENDUM C: ETHICAL CLEARANCE: UNISA COLLEGE OF HUMAN SCIENCES  
RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

**UNISA COLLEGE OF HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

1 Approval: 21 October 2014

Amended: 16 August 2017

Dear Ms Awelani Rieneth Mandiwana

**Decision: Ethics Approval from  
16 August 2017 to 15 August  
2019**

NHREC Registration # : REC-  
240816-052

CREC Reference # : 2014 CHS  
012

Name : MANDIWANA AR

Student #: 32162146

---

**Researcher(s):** Ms Awelani Rieneth Mandiwana  
Department of Communication Science  
amandiwana@yahoo.com

**Supervisor (s):** Prof R Barker  
Department of Department of Communication Science  
(012) 4296722  
barker@unisa.ac.za

**Working title of research:**

A MEASURING TOOL FOR INTEGRATED INTERNAL COMMUNICATION: A CASE STUDY OF  
THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA LIBRARY

**Qualification:** BA Communication

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Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the Unisa College of Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for 5 years.

*The **request for amendment** was reviewed by the Chair of College of Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee on 16 August 2017 in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment. The application needed only slight change on the topic, amendments rephrasing of questions and extension of data collection date. Everything regarding the entire proposal remains the same. The extension is therefore granted. The decision will be tabled at the next CREC meeting on 30 August 2017 for notification/ratification.*

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the CREC Committee.
3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing, accompanied by a progress report.
5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data require additional ethics clearance.
7. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date (7 August 2019). Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

*Note:*

*The reference number 2014 CHS 012 should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.*

Yours sincerely,

Signature

Prof AH Mavhandu-Mudzusi

Chair : CHS Research Ethics Committee

E-mail: [mmudza@unisa.ac.za](mailto:mmudza@unisa.ac.za)

Tel: (012) 429-2055

Signature

Professor A Phillips

Executive Dean : CHS

E-mail: [Phillap@unisa.ac.za](mailto:Phillap@unisa.ac.za)

Tel: (012) 429-6825

**ADDENDUM D: ETHICAL CLEARANCE: RESEARCH PERMISSION SUB-COMMITTEE  
OF SRIPDC**

**RESEARCH PERMISSION SUB-COMMITTEE OF SRIPDC**

17 November 2014 (1st Issued)  
19 August 2015 (1st Amendment)  
05 April 2016 (2nd Amendment)  
31 October 2016 (3rd Amendment)  
25 August 2017 (4th Amendment)

**Decision: Research Permission  
Approval from 1 September 2017  
until 31 August 2018**

Ref#:

2016\_RPSC\_025\_AR

Mrs. Awelani Mandiwana

Student #: 32162146

Staff #: N/A

**Principal Investigator:**

**Ms. Awelani Mandiwana**

Department of Communication Science

School of Arts

College of Human Sciences

amandiwana@yahoo.com, (012) 427-5389/ 082 807 1491

**A study titled: "A measuring tool for integrated internal communication: A Case  
Study of the University of South Africa Library."**

Your request for the extension of the data collection period of the study involving UNISA employees in respect of the above study has been considered by the Research Permission Subcommittee (RPSC) of the UNISA Senate Research, Innovation, Postgraduate Degrees and Commercialization Committee (SRIPCC) on 24 August 2017.

It is my pleasure to inform you that permission has been granted for the study. You may:

1. Send an online survey to Unisa Library employees at all the Centers.
2. Data collection period has been extended until 31 August 2018.

You are requested to submit a report of the study to the Research Permission Subcommittee (RPSC@unisa.ac.za) within 3 months of completion of the study.



The personal information made available to the researcher(s)/gatekeeper(s) will only be used for the advancement of this research project as indicated and for the purpose as described in this permission letter. The researcher(s)/gatekeeper(s) must take all appropriate precautionary measures to protect the personal information given to him/her/them in good faith and it must not be passed on to third parties. The dissemination of research instruments through the use of electronic mail should strictly be through blind copying so as to protect the participants' right of privacy. The researcher hereby indemnifies UNISA from any claim or action arising from or due to the researcher's breach of his/her information protection obligations.

**Note:**

*The reference number **2016\_RPSC\_025\_AR** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended Research participants and the Research Permission Subcommittee.*



We would like to wish you well in your research undertaking.

Kind regards,

Dr. Retha Visagie: Deputy Chairperson - RPSC

visagrg@unisa.ac.za; Tel: 012 429-2478

**Prof Annemarie Davis – Acting  
Chairperson: RPSC**

Email: [davisa@unisa.ac.za](mailto:davisa@unisa.ac.za) Tel: (012) 429-8357



## ADDENDUM E: INFORMED CONSENT

### INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Title of the Research Project: *A measuring tool for integrated internal communication: a case study of the University of South Africa Library*

Name of the Researcher: Mandiwana Awelani Reineth  
E-mail: amandiwana@yahoo.com  
Address: 106 Windswawel Street, Monument Park Ext. 4, 0181  
Cellphone: 082 807 1491

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above study and have the opportunity to ask questions: Yes ☐ No ☐
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without having to give any reason: Yes ☐ No ☐
3. I agree to the recording of the qualitative data collection method: Yes ☐ No ☐
4. I agree that I have received a signed copy of the informed agreement:  
Yes ☐ No ☐
5. I agree to take part in the above study: Yes ☐ No ☐

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Participant Name and Surname (please print)

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Participant's Signature

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Date

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Researcher Name and Surname (please print)

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Researcher's Signature

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Date

## **ADDEDNUM F: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET**

Ethics clearance reference number:

Research permission reference number: **2016\_RPSC\_025**

2017

### **A measuring tool for integrated internal communication: a case study of the University of South Africa Library**

#### **Dear Prospective Participant**

My name is **Awelani Reineth Mandiwana** and I am doing research under supervision of **Prof. Rachel Barker**, a Professor in the Department of Communication Science, towards a Master's Degree at the University of South Africa. I received funding from the University of South Africa to conduct this study/research. You are invited you to participate in this study entitled: A Measuring Tool for Integrated Internal Communication: A case study of the University of South Africa Library.

#### **WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?**

This study is expected to collect important information that could be used in measuring internal communication at the University of South Africa Library.

#### **WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?**

You are chosen to participate in this study as an employee of the Unisa Library. Your contact details (telephone and email) were obtained from the Library, as part of the approval process that gives me permission to interact with the Library staff in conducting the study. *[the Protection Of Personal Information Act, nr 4 of 2013, necessitates the disclosure of how access was gained to the personal information of prospective participants]*. This study consists of three phases: the first phase was the qualitative interviews conducted in August/September 2016 with a sample of fifteen (15) participants, selected from twenty (20) members of the Library management (Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director, 4x Directors, 7x Deputy Directors, 6x Managers and 1x Head of structure).



Phase 2 focuses on the pilot study, which will be conducted with five (5) members; three (3) members of the Library, one (1) person external to the Library and Prof Barker, the supervisor in this study.

Phase 3 is the quantitative survey which will be conducted with two hundred and thirty (230) Library employees, using an online survey questionnaire.

### **WHAT IS THE NATURE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?**

The first phase of the study involves qualitative data collection using semi-structured interviews, with audio recording of the interview discussion. The interview questions focus on the participant insight and knowledge of the internal communication system of the Library.

The second phase of the study is a pilot exercise which will focus on testing the survey questionnaire.

The third phase involves quantitative data collection using the survey questionnaire, which will be completed by two hundred and thirty Library employees. The survey questionnaire will consist of demographic details, communication constructs, organizational culture and communication experiences. The completion of the questionnaire will take  $\pm 30$  minutes of your time.

### **CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY EVEN AFTER HAVING AGREED TO PARTICIPATE?**

Participating in this study is voluntary. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason. It will be impossible to withdraw your opinions and ideas once you have submitted the survey, because an anonymous online questionnaire will be used. This will make it difficult to identify your questionnaire, once submitted.

## **WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?**

As a Unisa Library employee, the benefits of participating in this study include the identification the weaknesses and strength of the Library communication system. This will assist the Library management in understanding your communication needs and improving the communication that takes place in your organisation.

## **ARE THERE ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR ME IF I PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT?**

There will be no risks or harm in participating in this study. Your participation will remain anonymous and the information will be treated with the privacy and confidentiality that it deserves. The Informed Consent protects you from any disclosure of identity and information that you have provided.

## **WILL THE INFORMATION THAT I CONVEY TO THE RESEARCHER AND MY IDENTITY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?**

You have the right to insist that your name and signature will not be recorded anywhere and that no one, apart from the researcher and identified members of the research team, will know about your involvement in this research (*confidentiality*) and no one will be able to connect you to the answers you give (*anonymity*). Privacy of information is guaranteed.

Your answers will be given a code number or a pseudonym and you will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings.

Your answers may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is done properly, including the transcriber, external coder, and members of the Research Ethics Review Committee. Otherwise, records that identify you will be available only to people working on the study, unless you give permission for other people to see the records.

Your anonymous data will be used for the purpose of a research report, journal articles and/or conference proceedings. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identified in such a report.

#### **HOW WILL THE RESEARCHER (S) PROTECT THE SECURITY OF DATA?**

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by the researcher for a period of five years in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet at my home address: 106 Windswawel Street, Monument Park Ext.4 for future research or academic purposes; electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. Hard copies will be shredded and/or electronic copies will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer through the use of a relevant software programme.

#### **WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?**

There will be no payment or any incentives for your participation in this study.

#### **HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICS APPROVAL**

This study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of the Senate Research and Innovation and Postgraduate Degrees Committee (SRIPGDC), Unisa. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you so wish.

#### **HOW WILL I BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS/RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH?**

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Awelani Reineth Mandiwana on 082 807 1491 or email AT [amandiwana@yahoo.com](mailto:amandiwana@yahoo.com). The findings are accessible after the approval of the research report.

Should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please contact the researcher at the above contact number and email address.

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Professor R Barker at 012 429–6772 or [barker@unisa.ac.za](mailto:barker@unisa.ac.za). You can also contact the research ethics chairperson of the research Permission Subcommittee (RPSC) of the Senate Research and Innovation and Postgraduate Degrees Committee (SRIPGDC), Prof L Labuschagne (Chairperson: RPSC) at 012 429–6368, Email: [llabus@unisa.ac.za](mailto:llabus@unisa.ac.za) if you have any ethical concerns.

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

*As signed*

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Awelani Reineth Mandiwana